Canadian Football League

A Historical Look

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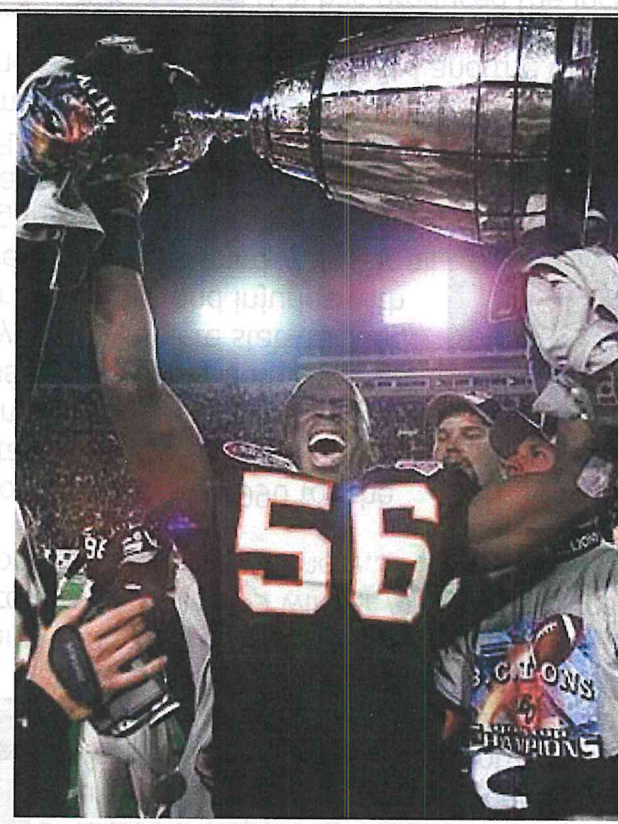
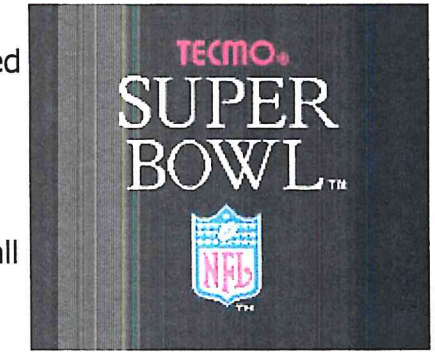


The Grey Cup. It is what they all play for. An institution in Canada for close to a century the chalice donated by Governor General Lord Earl Grey to the Canadian Rugby Federation in 1909 has been the symbol of football supremacy in the Canadian Football League since 1954. Above Daved Benefield celebrates the B.C. Lions 2000 Grey Cup victory. This site brings together stories from the past on players of interest from various sources. Whether becoming successes or failures each player has left an indelible

Acquiring big name NFL talent has long been a pursuit of CFL General Managers. It is a fascinating process for both fans and media alike. Follow throughout this site some of the memorable and not so memorable acquisitions from CFL teams over the past 35 years. Review the team pages for stories of big name players who have come and gone. Michael Petrie of the Calgary Herald takes a look at how a big name in the U.S.

mark on the history of the game.

There is a great deal of acclaim reserved for the Heisman Trophy as the top player in American College Football. Also it has been proven on a number of occasions that winning the Heisman does not automatically ensure success in the professional ranks. Regardless of success or failure the sporting world will always take a keen interest in the paths former winners take as professionals. The Canadian Football League has had a significant role in the career of a number of winners and an even greater number of runner-ups. From the flare of '72 winner Johnny Rodgers (pictured) to the failure of '74 runner-up Anthony Davis to the travels of '89 winner Andre Ware, read more about the history of some of these players here...

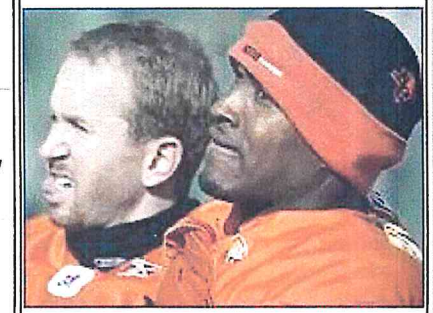


Tecmo Super Bowl released in 1990 for the Nintendo Entertainment System revolutionized sports video games. The game holds legendary status among game enthusiasts. The season play with complete stat-tracking, changing player conditions and injuries with actual NFL players laid the ground work for all future football games. So how does one of the most popular sports games of all-time relate to the CFL? Within the game were a number of prominent players whose career paths included stops in the CFL. Find out more about Tecmo Super Bowl and the CFL here...

TSN has produced the incredibly popular CFL Live since the 1998 season. The show has been a hit for the network as well as playing a lead role in the turnaround of Canadian Football as a television

does not guarantee success in the Canadian league here...

The Canadian Football League is primarily a gate driven league. While some success has been made regarding sponsorship and television contract, teams primary source of revenue is their in-game attendance. What follows is a per team breakdown of attendance from 1995. read more attendance here...



commodity. The show has also brought notoriety and popularity for the football panel comprised of Chris Schultz, Matt Dunigan and Jock Climie. What some viewers and fans may not realize is that each member of the panel had an outstanding career as a player in the CFL. Each panelist has a clear passion for the Canadian game, a passion that was evident in each of their respective playing careers. Read more about the panel as players here...

Of all the teams in the NFL that have a connection with the Canadian Football League, the Kansas City Chiefs stand out above all the others when it comes to player movement between leagues. A number of prominent CFL stars and coaches have gone on to have success with Kansas City. In addition, a number of CFL stars have continued on to the Canadian league after spending time within the Chiefs organization. From more recent players such as Lawrence Tynes and Mark Boerigter (pictured); back to the likes of Tom Clements and Marv Levy there has definitely been a history of activity. From a feature article from NFL Canada read more about this on-going relationship here...

Please forward any comments or suggestions to: cfl_historical@yahoo.ca

The combination of Dave Dickenson and Casey Printers is a duo that has been very successful in B.C. for two seasons. Each quarterback brings a certain style and ability to the field but the result with either option has been a success. For CFL fans, the duo brings back memories of another quarterback combination. A duo who just happened to have the same uniform numbers for the Edmonton Eskimos in the late 1970's and early 80's. Warren Moon and Tom Wilkinson were the centerpiece of the Eskimos dynasty. While the current version does have more controversy. There are definite similarities. Read more about the comparison here...

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To enhance what is currently accessible for fans and would be fans on-line from a central location for each member club.
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Canadian Football League Fans WebRing

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Joe Theismann and Leo Cahill with the Argos in 1971.

Former QB Theismann no longer an Argo fan

Joe Theismann recently spoke out about his former club the Toronto Argonauts signing of suspended NFL running back Ricky Williams. Theismann who played for the Argonauts from 1971-73 stated he was embarrassed to have worn the Argonaut "A" on his helmet. He saw the signing of Williams as an indictment of ethics. He pointed out that the team was sending the wrong message accepting a known drug user in an effort to sell tickets. Theismann may choose to forget the type of team his 1970's Argonauts were. Colourful characters meant for an interesting group with habits that may be in line with the root of Ricky Williams problems with the NFL.

CFL Newsmaker
Joe Theismann has spoken out against the Toronto Argonauts signing of suspended NFL back Ricky Williams. Do Ricky and the 1971-73 Argonauts have anything in common?

CFL Legend Doug Flutie retires

As the 2006 Canadian Football League season approaches, 21 year football veteran and CFL legend Doug Flutie has announced his retirement. In his retirement new conference Flutie pointed out to the American media in attendance what an outstanding time he had playing football in the Canadian Football League from 1990-97. He made a point of stating that
it was the CFL that put the fun back in football for the Heisman winner. Flutie specifically cited playing under Don Matthews and with players Mike "Pinball" Clemons, Allen Pitts and his brother Darren over his various stops in the league. A gentleman throughout Flutie did not forget the opportunity the CFL gave to him as a professional. A look at his career with 3 different franchises clearly shows the excellence that Doug gave back to the Canadian League. Read more about Doug with British Columbia, Calgary and Toronto.

Rough Ride... Ottawa future uncertain

The Canadian Football League has ceased the operation of the Ottawa Renegades for the 2006 season. A series of under-financed and inept ownership over the past 30 years has turned a once proud football city into a questionable CFL market with an uncertain future. Those with an optimistic view know that a solid, committed ownership (with admitted deep pockets) could definitely find success with a franchise in Ottawa. The question is; that with an endless string of disappointment and frustration how much more can a CFL fan in the nation's capital be expected to take, to put their faith in a new ownership and team philosophy yet again. Review some of the moments and characters in Ottawa Rough Rider history on the team page.

Ottawa Renegades - Remembered - 2002-2005

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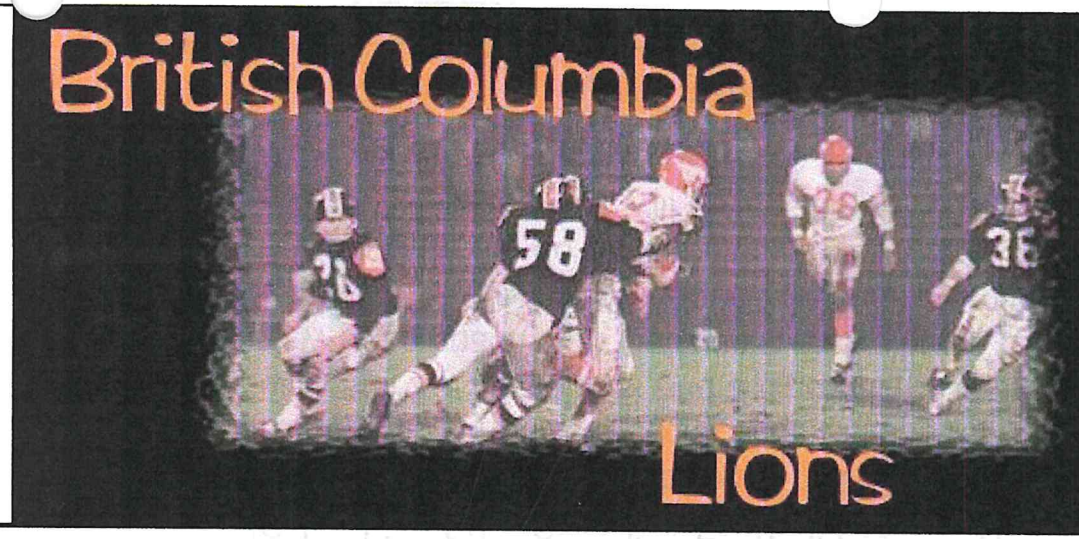

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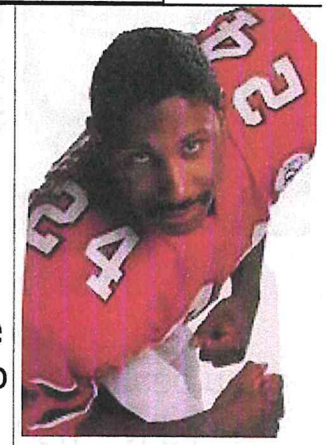
Doug Flutie #22

"One of the most exciting college football players of the '80s -- but a man who has been rejected, scorned, ridiculed and humbled as a pro -- is deliriously happy to find himself a born-again quarterback, this time with the British Columbia Lions of the Canadian Football League."

-- Douglas S. Looney, Sports Illustrated, August 20, 1990

Read more about Doug Flutie's arrival in the CFL with the B.C.Lions here...



Electrifying 'Swervin' Mervyn Fernandez won the 1985 Most Outstanding Player award along with the Grey Cup for the Lions that year. The star receiver

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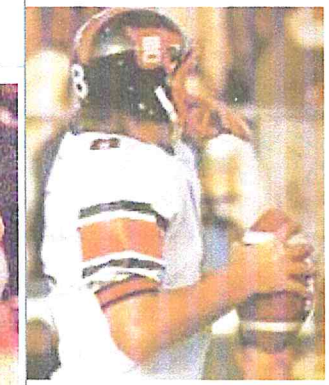
Joe Kapp is a legend on both sides of the border. Kapp is the only player ever to capture the Rose Bowl, Grey Cup and Super Bowl over the course of a playing career. Kapp came out of the University of California in 1959 and signed with the Calgary Stampeders. He was traded to the Lions in 1961. He was exceptional for the Lions leading the CFL's newest franchise to its first ever Grey Cup appearance in 1963 as well as a return in 1964 where the Lions won there first ever championship. Kapp went on to the NFL in 1967 with the Minnesota Vikings and went on to have an exceptional career. He was inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1984 and stands as one of the most prominent B.C.Lions ever; read more about Joe here...

Roy Dewalt was a rifle-armed superstar for the Lions in the 1980's. He was drafted out of Texas-Arlington in 1980 by the Cleveland Browns as a running back but Roy elected to go north and sign with British Columbia of the Canadian Football League. He was named the starting quarterback in 1983 and went on to have a number of spectacular seasons teaming with Mervyn Fernandez and a dynamic offence under new head coach Don Matthews. Dewalt was the Offensive MVP of the Lions 37-24 1985 Grey Cup victory over Hamilton at B.C.Place. Although he did go on to play with Winnipeg and then Ottawa at the end of his career Roy will always be remembered as a B.C. Lion. read more about Roy here...

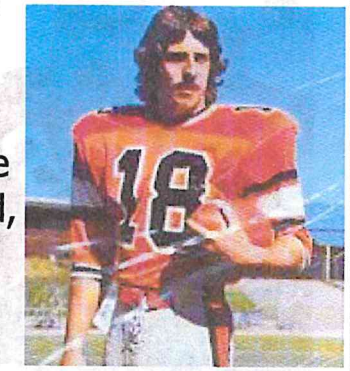
Willie Fleming finished his career with an astounding rushing average of 7.1 yards per carry.

from San Jose State electrified west coast fans for 5 seasons with the Lions eclipsing 1,000 yards 4 years before going on to star with the Los Angeles Raiders of the N.F.L. in 1988. read more about Mervyn here...



Jerry Tagge led the Nebraska Cornhuskers to a National Championship in 1970 and '71. He was drafted by the Green Bay Packers in 1972

The Hall of Famer starred for the Lions for 8 seasons from 1959-1966. He was a graceful runner with speed to burn and was dubbed "Willie the Wisp". Fleming along with quarterback Joe Kapp anchored the potent offence of the B.C.Lions in the 1960's. The Lions who joined the league in 1954 first reached the Grey Cup in 1963 hosted at Empire Stadium. It was a controversial hit by Hamilton Defensive End Angelo Mosca that knocked Fleming out of the game. The hit widely considered late along the sidelines ended Fleming's day with a concussion (pictured) and was arguably the deciding factor in Hamilton's victory that day. Willie and the Lions would return to capture Grey Cup glory over Hamilton in 1964. Read more about the Willie Fleming here...



The most recognizable B.C. Lion of all-time has to be kicker/punter Lui Passaglia. The Vancouver native holds numerous pro football records compiled over a remarkable 25 season career. The legend that is Lui grew up in Vancouver's east end, went to college at Simon Fraser University and then spent 25 seasons with his hometown team complete with 3 Grey Cup Championships. He booted the winning field goal in the thrilling 1994 Grey Cup victory over Baltimore; and his kicks provided the winning points in his last game a Grey Cup victory over Montreal in 2000. A true gentleman and incredible athlete who continues to promote Canadian football and the B.C. Lions wherever he can; there's no denying Luuu is one of the greatest Canadian Football players of all-time. Read more about the incomparable
Lui Passaglia here...

and spent 3 seasons with the Packers. Tagge joined B.C. in 1977 and was named as the Western Division Most Outstanding Player that year leading the "Cardiac Kids" to a 10-6 record. Read more about Jerry here...

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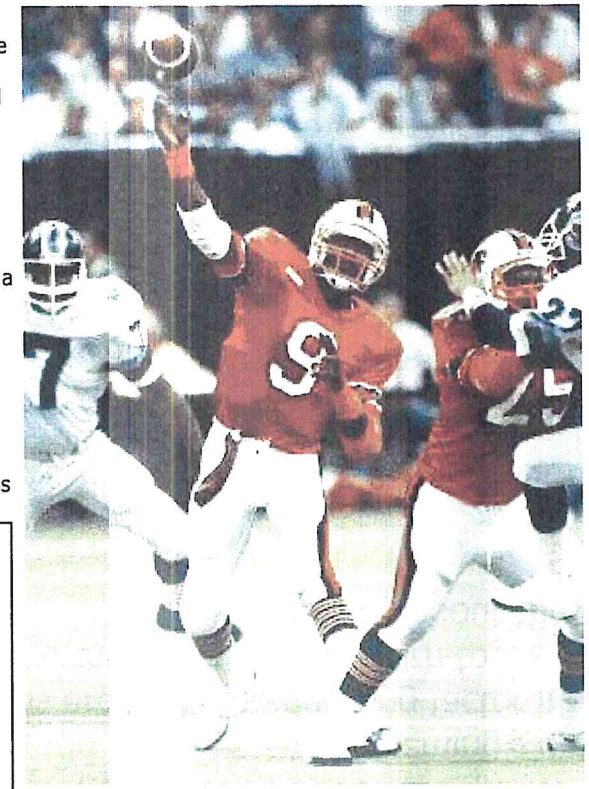
Roy Dewalt - Quarterback - B.C.Lions - 1980-87



Roy Dewalt starred in college at quarterback with the University of Texas-Arlington. In 1978 and '79 he was named SLC offensive player of the year and is a member of the UTA athletic Hall of Fame. He was drafted by the Cleveland Browns in the 9th round of the 1980 NFL draft. Instead instead of try-out for Clevelend out of position Dewalt signed with British Columbia in May of 1980 and attended camp that year as a quarterback. He saw limited action in 1980 behind starter Joe Paopao.

The 6'1" 210lb's spent 1981 as a backup and in 1982 entered a platoon situation with Joe Paopao. Roy emerged that season as a future star throwing 18 touchdowns against just 6 interceptions wrestling the starting spot away from Paopao. In 1983 former Edmonton assistant Don Matthews was named head coach and immediately declared Dewalt would be the teams starting quarterback. The confidence in Roy paid off as Dewalt led the league with a 62.6 passing percentage. B.C. finished first in the West in '83 with an 11-5 record, The Lions advance to the Grey Cup to be played at their new home stadium B.C. Place the Lions were edged 18-17 by Toronto but they would return to the big game.

Dewalt developed a chemistry with all-star receiver Mervyn Fernandez that would carry the Lions to a 12-3 record in 1984 and 13-3 record in 1985. Fernandez was named Most Outstanding Player in 1985 and B.C. advance to the Grey Cup against Hamilton in '85. An injury to Fernandez could not stop the Lions or Dewalt as B.C. defeated Hamilton 37-24 for the Lions 3rd

Passing

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1980	BC	119	55	616	46.2	4	4
1981	BC	55	27	343	49.1	1	1
1982	BC	282	172	2505	61.0	18	6
1983	BC	442	275	3637	62.2	22	16
1984	BC	437	258	3613	59.0	21	15
1985	BC	476	301	4237	63.2	27	12
1986	BC	556	314	4057	56.4	17	16
1987	BC	531	303	3855	57.1	19	14
1988	Winn	131	58	719	44.3	2	6
	Ott	101	40	565	39.6	1	6
Total		3130	1803	24147	57.6	132	96

Grey Cup Championship in their history. It was the finest season in club history, attendance records were set and it was Roy Dewalt who was named Offensive Player of the game throwing for 394 yards and 3 touchdowns in the championship game.

Roy had a great season in '86 eclipsing 4,000 yards passing for the second time in his career but the Lions were unable to repeat as champions and were defeated by Edmonton in the Western Final 41-5. 1987 would be Roy's final season with B.C. the club finished in first place with a 12-6 record but again were defeated soundly by Edmonton in the Western Final 31-7.

Roy was a free agent after the '87 season and the club wanted a new direction at quarterback, they traded for rival quarterback Matt Dunigan out from under the Edmonton Eskimos then signed Dunigan to a big contract and severed ties with Dewalt. Roy moved on to sign with Winnipeg and injuries affected his stay with Winnipeg, he was traded to Ottawa late in the season and retired following the 1988 season. It was a disappointing end to an outstanding career. Roy Dewalt was a marvel for the British Columbia Lions in the 1980's. The club enjoyed unparalleled success with Dewalt at the helm and his contributions were immense to some outstanding teams.

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Mervyn Fernandez - Wide Receiver - B.C.Lions - 1982-86

Mervyn Fernandez spent 5 years with the Lions (1982-1986), during which he was a four time All-Star (82-85), the 1982 Dr. Beattie Martin Western Conference Rookie of the Year, and runner-up as the 1982 Schenley Rookie of the Year. Mervyn is also the only Lion chosen as the league's Most Valuable Player (1985).

	Receiving			
Year	No.	YDS	Avg.	TD
1982	64	1,046	16.3	8
1983	78	1,284	16.5	10
1984	89	1,486	16.7	17
1985	95	1,727	18.2	15
1986	48	865	18.0	5

Merv was unmatched in his timing and ability to jump and catch in a crowd, and set fear into Defensive Backs throughout the League. Multi-talented, he could also pass, and when Lui Passaglia was injured, kick. On three occasions he scored four touchdowns in a game : 07/06/84, 10/13/84, and 06/17/85.

Through secondary contacts in 1984, Oakland's Al Davis offered the Lions one million dollars to release Merv from his contract, but Merv and the Raiders would have to wait for another day.

Merv was injured for the '86 semi-final against arch-rival Winnipeg. Merv's final season with the B.C. Lions came to an end when Al Davis and The Raiders offered him a $200,000 signing bonus and a base salary $300,000/year to showcase his talent in the NFL- a far cry from 1982's $35,000 contract. From 1987-91 Merv played with the Raiders then sat out the '92 season. In '88 he led the NFL in average yards per catch- 26.0. In '89 he had 57 receptions for 1069 yards and nine touchdowns, and in so doing, became only the sixth Raider to gain over 1000 pass yards in a season. In '90, he had 52 catches for 839 yards. His Raider totals included 209 catches for 19 touchdowns.

In 1993, GM Eric Tillman re-signed Merv Fernandez with the Lions. Merv returned in 1994 to a team struggling under Danny McManus and Kent Austin. Among other things, the team had many great receivers and preferred to play a short, over the middle game. Against the Shreveport Pirates on August 27 Merv caught two passes for touchdowns and dropped a sure, third six points. His final 1994 game stats were 25 catches for 282 yards.

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Willie Fleming - Running Back - 1959-67 - University of Iowa

Willie Fleming joined the Lions out of the University of Iowa in 1959. Fleming had grown up in Detroit, Michigan and was an outstanding athlete with great speed. It was this speed that was ideally suited for the Canadian Football League. Fleming joined the Lions who were a relatively new franchise joining the league in 1954. By his second season he was already a dominating figure on the Canadian Football landscape becoming the first B.C. Lions to eclipse 1,000 yards rushing with 1,051 yards on 125 carries for an astounding 8.4 yard average.

-

In 1961 Joe Kapp joined the Lions and the team turned a corner. By 1963 the club was dominating the Western Division finishing with a 12-4 record tops in the Conference. Kapp and Fleming led the offence. Fleming had his finest season in pro football 1,234 yards rushing on 127 carries for an incredible 9.7 yard average. Stopping Fleming was definitely the goal of the Hamilton Tiger Cats as they came into the Grey Cup being hosted by B.C. at Empire Stadium. The Tiger Cats were known for their dominant defence led by Notre Dame grad Angelo Mosca. Mosca and Fleming would definately factor into one of the most controversial plays in Grey Cup history. Fleming carried the ball along the sidelines and out of bounds the referee blew his whistle and at the same time Angelo Mosca came over top landing on Fleming and injuring. B.C.'s star running back was forced to leave the game on the "dirty" play by Mosca. The tactic worked as Hamilton went on to a 21-10 victory. The 36,545 Lions fans at Empire Stadium and thousands at home were outraged but eager to return the payback in 1964.

-

Yr	C	Yds	Avg.	Lg	TD
1960	125	1051	8.4	98	10
1963	127	1234	9.7	97	5
Career	868	6125	7.1	109	37

The Lions would return to the Grey Cup in 1964 and win the big game in Toronto 34-24 over Hamilton for some payback. It was the franchises first Grey Cup and a culmination of hard work for Fleming, Kapp and the whole team, Fleming did have a touchdown in the game. Willie would play 2 more seasons in B.C. and continue to have great success including a 109 yard touchdown run on October 17, 1964 versus Edmonton. He would retire following the 1966 season with 6,125 career rushing yards, 37 touchdowns and an incredible 7.1 yards per carry career average. He was a Western Division All-Star on 3 occasions and a CFL All-Star in 1963. A true gentleman and outstanding athlete Fleming was inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1982.

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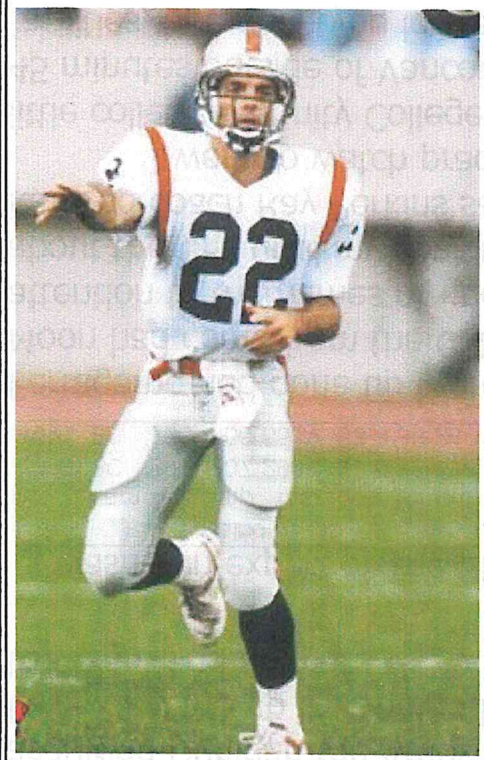
Doug Flutie-Quarterback - B.C.Lions - 1990-91

Excerpt From 'Flutie' By Perry Lefko Warwick Publishing - Toronto Pg.84



I had looked around the NFL and didn't have a lot of options there. I started talking a bit with the British Columbia Lions, who had acquired my rights after Calgary took me off their negotiation list. Larry Kuharich, who became the head coach of the Lions after the 1989 season, immediately put my name on the team's negotiation list just ahead of the Toronto Argo's, who also put in a claim.

The Lions had the league-leading quarterback in passing yardage the year before in Matt Dunigan, who was earning a base salary of $210,000 a year. He was involved in a contract squabble pertaining to bonus money and was traded to Toronto on March 20 in a six-for-one deal. Once there, Dunigan was signed to a new deal. The Argo's were courting Major Harris at the

time. He played U.S. college ball at West Virginia and had finished fourth the year before in voting for the Heisman. The day after acquiring Dunigan the Argos traded Harris' rights to the Lions. The Lions flew me up in June and let me take a look at the facilities and the team and all that.

I wasn't an expert on the CFL by any means, but I did have some knowledge about its history. I knew that Joe Theismann had played for Toronto in the early 70's. I had heard Vince Ferragamo had gone up there to play in Montreal. I knew that Warren Moon had come from the CFL, but growing up I didn't pay too much attention to the names or know any of the players. I hadn't heard a lot about the CFL until my senior year when we were playing Alabama and its head coach Ray Perkins said I would make a good CFL quarterback.

Passing							
Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1990	BC	392	207	2960	52.8	16	19
1991	BC	730	466	6619	63.8	38	24

I went to watch practice, and it was kind of at a rinky-dink little college – Trinity College – that they were using for a facility about 45 minutes outside of Vancouver. I kind of shook my head at the facilities, but when you looked at the guys on the field they were great athletes. Mark Gastineau, who was a key member of the New York Jets' Sack Exchange, joined the team as a free agent that year. Mark had his share of problems before and after that, but as a person he was fine. I never had any problems with him. Major Harris was there. I talked to some of the guys, and they were shaking their heads watching Major, who was such a fantastic athlete. He could throw the ball a mile and run, but he had trouble learning the system; he didn't really read coverage.

I was going back to Boston because the contract talks between my agents and the Lions' management weren't working out.

That's when Murray Pezim intervened. He called me over to his house,which was situated just off the downtown core. Murray treated me like a king for a couple days and even cooked for me. Murray loved to cook.

Murray was a real character. He described himself publicly as the "world's greatest promoter." He said all kinds of crazy things and didn't care what people thought. It got down to him asking me what it would take to get me to play in B.C. We worked a deal for about $350,000 U.S. annually for two years. It was the highest salary in the league and the first in American currency. The contract called for $150,000 to be registered with the league as part of a standard player's contract and $165,000 to be paid as part of a personal services deal. The remaining monies were for bonuses.

Murray announced the signing in his office in the early evening and proudly proclaimed "The B.C. Lions are going to kick the crap out of the Argos, and Doug Flutie will be there, Tell Dunigan that Gastineau is looking for him."

Continued by CFL-H

Doug split playing time with Joe Paopao and Major Harris in his first season with B.C. under coach Larry Kuharich. Kuharich ran a NFL style offence which did not fully utilize Doug's ability. Kuharich was replaced with Bob O'Billovich at mid-season and it is under O'Billovich that Flutie really began to blossom as B.C closed out the 1990 season. The Lions finished 6-11-1 in 1990.

Under O'Billovich in '91 Flutie exploded passing for 6,619 yards a record in professional football. Flutie threw 38 Touchdowns and 24

interceptions. He also had 610 rushing yard as he won his first of 6 Most Outstanding Player Awards. Darren Flutie joined B.C. at midseason after being released by the Phoenix Cardinals in just 8 games as a rookie he had 860 receiving yards and 6 touchdowns, remarkable totals. The Lions finished 11-7 in 1991 but were defeated 43-41 by Danny Barrett and the Calgary Stampeders in the Western Semi-Final.

After the '91 season it was time to negotiate a new contract for Doug, while he did consider a return to the NFL; the CFL was the best option for Doug both professionally and financially. After a drawn out contract dispute with Murray Pezim, Doug was contacted by Larry Ryckman new owner of the Calgary Stampeders. Ryckman was looking to make a splash and did so with a three year deal with an escalating salary of more than $1 million annually by the end of the contract. Included in the deal was also an option to own a portion of the franchise at the end of the deal. The deal was too good to pass up and Doug left the West Coast after an outstanding season in 1991.

Read about Doug Flutie with the Toronto Argonauts here...
Read more about Doug Flutie with the Calgary Stampeders here...

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Joe Kapp - Quarterback - B.C.Lions - 1961-66

by Hannah Gordon, NFLPlayer.com, 4/12/2004

Joe Kapp is the only quarterback to lead teams to the Rose Bowl, Grey Cup, and Super Bowl. But he could have just as easily been a defensive end.

"I always said in fifty-some odd years being around some top-level players in the NFL and college, Joe Kapp was the one guy who could start in all 22 positions in college football," said John Ralston, an assistant coach on that University of California 1958 Rose Bowl team. Ralston, now with the College Football Hall of Fame spoke on a conference call discussing Kapp's recent election to the Hall.

"I don't care if you were playing at the University of Miami, the University of Nebraska, or Notre Dame, Joe Kapp would have played all 22 positions. That tells you how competitive he was," Ralston said. However, Kapp was destined to play under center.

"If you are competitive and good-looking, you got to play quarterback," Kapp chimed in. "Plus, it's more fun."

Kapp's path to football stardom started in Salinas, California, where Kapp hung from apricot trees. He had heard that Otto Graham was 6-2 and he figured he had to do something since no one in his family was that big. He liked to settle arguments, and that was one of the duties of the quarterback. By the end of junior high, Kapp knew where he was headed thanks to a field trip his homeroom teacher arranged for a football game at the University of California.

"The cannon goes off and here comes the Cal band on the field. It was quite spectacular. I wanted to know how I could play in this stadium," said Kapp, who would later become an All-American at Cal. "College football was different then. College football was important."

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1962	BC	359	197	3279	54.9	28	18
1963	BC	339	183	2011	54.0	20	15
1964	BC	329	194	2816	59.0	14	13
1965	BC	423	219	2961	51.8	15	19
1966	BC	363	211	2889	58.1	11	18

As a senior in 1958, Kapp led his team to the Rose Bowl following a 1-9 season for one of the biggest season turnarounds in college football history. While at Cal, Kapp also lettered in basketball for two seasons under NCAA title-winning coach Pete Newell.

From Cal, Kapp became what he refers to as a "migratory football worker". After being drafted by the Washington Redskins, Kapp chose to play for the Canadian Football League because he was not offered what he felt was an acceptable contract. Up north, he led British Columbia to the Grey Cup in 1963 and 1964. Over his eight seasons in the CFL, Kapp became the second-most productive passer in league history and earned his place in the CFL Hall of Fame.

In 1967, Kapp returned to the United States to play for the Minnesota Vikings where he led the Vikes to their first winning record and first playoff appearance in 1968. In 1969, he took the team to its first-ever Super Bowl appearance in Super Bowl IV. In Minnesota, Kapp coined the phrase "40 for 60" meaning 40 men playing together for 60 full minutes. Kapp refused to accept the team MVP award, saying that everyone was most valuable. He also declined the Vikings' contract extension offer following the season.

At that point, Kapp became part of NFL Players Association history, as well. The Patriots traded for Kapp's rights and he played for New England in 1970. However, he refused to sign the Standard Player Contract in 1971. Kapp went on to pursue a career in entertainment but sued the NFL in 1972 charging that certain rules of the NFL violated the antitrust laws and caused his "unlawful expulsion" from professional football in 1971. The NFL contended that it was immune from antitrust claims because of its collective bargaining agreement with the NFLPA, which had finally received official recognition as a union in 1968 by the National Labor Relations Board. In 1974, a federal judge agree with Kapp that the NFL had indeed violated antitrust laws, in part because there was no collective bargaining agreement in place on the date in question. However, when the case went to trial, the jury found that Kapp had not been damaged.

Following his time in Hollywood, Kapp returned to his alma mater as head coach from 1982-1986. The most memorable moment of his tenure was "The Play" in the 1982 Cal v. Stanford game (the five-lateral kickoff return for a touchdown and the win in the final play), an even which inspired him to coin yet another phrase, "The Bear will not quit, the Bear will not die!"

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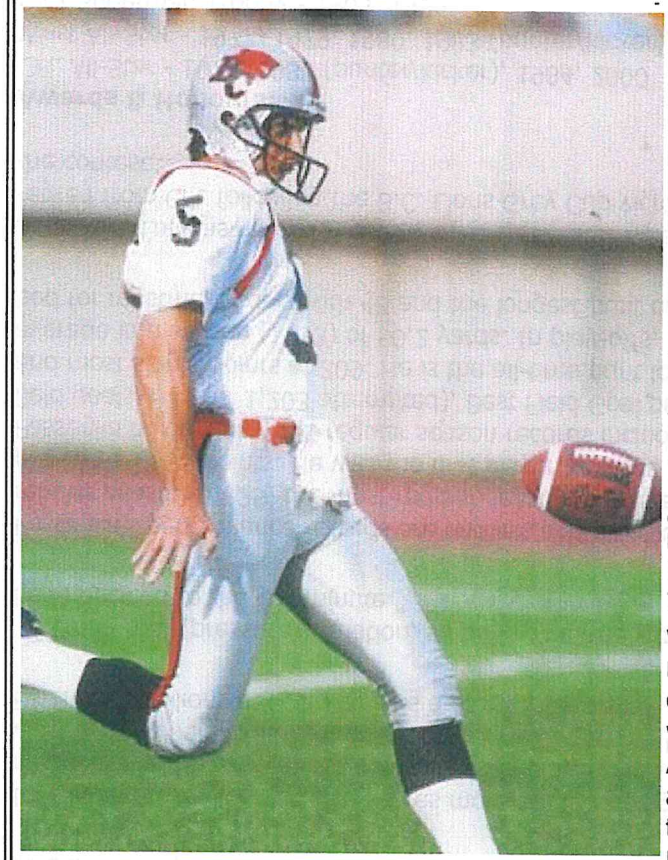
Lui Passaglia - Kicker/Punter - 1976-2000 - Simon Fraser University



No one has meant more to B.C. Lion football, and football in the lower mainland than Lui Passaglia. Passaglia spent an incredible 25 pro-seasons with the Lions. He continues to work and promote the club in the province to this day. He provided one of the quintessential moments in Grey Cup history with his winning kick in the 1994 championship over the Baltimore Stallions in front of 55,000 patriotic fans at B.C. Place. He had a truly linear career scoring his only two touchdowns in the league; 1 in his first game and 1 in his last regular season game as a professional. He retired at the age of 46 a champion when the Lions defeated Montreal 28-26 at Calgary's McMahon stadium.

excerpts from:
http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/print/CTVNews/20001123
Lui Passaglia was born in Vancouver, B.C. on June 7th, 1954. Passaglia was born in the blue-collar working-class district of East Vancouver in 1954, two months before the Lions joined the CFL. His father, a construction worker, took him to his first Lions game when he was eight.
After playing high school football, Passaglia chose to attend Simon Fraser University in Vancouver over the University of Hawaii. At Simon Fraser University, Passaglia played wide receiver as well as handling the kicking chores. In the 1976 Canadian College draft, he was selected as the fifth pick overall by the B.C. Lions, as a kicker and wide receiver. He caught a 10-yard touchdown pass in his first CFL game on July 22 against Saskatchewan. His only other touchdown came on a one-yard run in his final home game, Nov. 4 2000 against Saskatchewan. Lui spent his entire career, which spanned a quarter of a century, with the

team.

When I came into the league, he'd been in the league 11 years already, Als placekicker Terry Baker grinned Wednesday. He was someone I aspired to be like. He's was someone I could look toward and direct my career the way his has unfolded.

In Vancouver, a city that often cares more about finding a good latte than football, Passaglia is more recognizable than any hockey or basketball player. He's greeted with chants of Luuuu! Luuuu! each time he walks on the field. His winning field goal, with no time left on the clock, in the 1994 victory over the Baltimore Stallions at B.C. Place, is a part of Vancouver sports lore.

"If I'm in that (pressure) situation, so be it. I've rarely been in a championship game where anything has been decided to the last minute."

Passaglia's performance records are endless and he also holds many CFL records. He played the most regular seasons at 25, the most regular season games at 408, and scored the most points in regular season play with 3,991 points. He was the first player to score 200 points in a season (1987), with 214 points. Passaglia holds many CFL regular season records including most converts, 1,045 (560 consecutive), most field goals, 875 (of 1,203 attempted), Best Field Goal percentage in one year 90.9% (40 of 44 in year 2000) and most single points at 309. He is the all-time punt leader with 3,142 for 133,826 yards, with the highest average in a season (1983) of 50.2 yards. In play-offs, Lui holds records for most points with 210, and is tied for most field goals with 48 and the longest punt of 89 yards.

As a Lion, Lui was named Western Division All-Star nine times, and was a CFL All-Star four times. Passaglia retired from CFL following the B.C. Lions Grey Cup victory in 2000. Passaglia kicked the winning points in the contest..

Awards & Honours:
CFL All-Star - 1979, 1983 (punter/kicker), 1984, 2000
West All-Star - 1977, 1979, 1980, 1983 (punter/kicker), 1984, 1992, 1998, 1999, 2000
Dick Suderman Trophy - 1985, 1994
B.C. Sports Hall of Fame - 2001
Grey Cup Participation: 1983, 1985, 1988, 1994, 2000
Grey Cup Winning Teams: 1985, 1994, 2000

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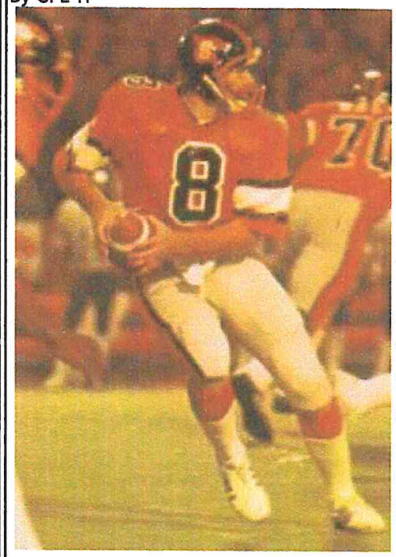
Jerry Tagge - Quarterback - B.C.Lions - 1977-79

By CFL-H



Tagge joined B.C. in 1977 after spending 1975 with San Antonio of the World Football League. Tagge had led Nebraska to a National Championship in 1970 and '71 under coach Tom Devaney. He was drafted by the Green Bay Packers in the first round of the 1972 draft. He spent three seasons with Green Bay leaving the team in 1974.

In 1977 with the Lions Tagge and the team were dubbed the "Cardiac Kids" under new head coach Vic Rapp. The team roared to a 10-2 record, winning four games in the last minute of play, then fell to 10-6. In the playoffs, the Lions defeated Winnipeg 33-22 for their first post-season victory since the 1964 Grey Cup. B.C. moved on to the Western Final with high hopes but were crushed by the eventual Grey Cup Champs the Edmonton Eskimos 40-1. Tagge was named the Western Division Most Outstanding Player, the first Lion to capture the trophy since Tom Brown in 1964.

The Lions struggled in 1978 as Tagge was unable to re-create the magic of his first season on the west coast. The club finished at 7-7-2 and missed the playoffs. Tagge returned to B.C. in 1979 but was injured in the second half of the season and the starting quarterback duties fell to rookie Joe Paopao. The injury would end his playing career but fans still remember the last second heroics of Jerry Tagge and the "Cardiac Kids" in the summer of 1977.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1977	BC	405	232	2787	57.3	14	13
1978	BC	430	243	3134	56.5	13	20

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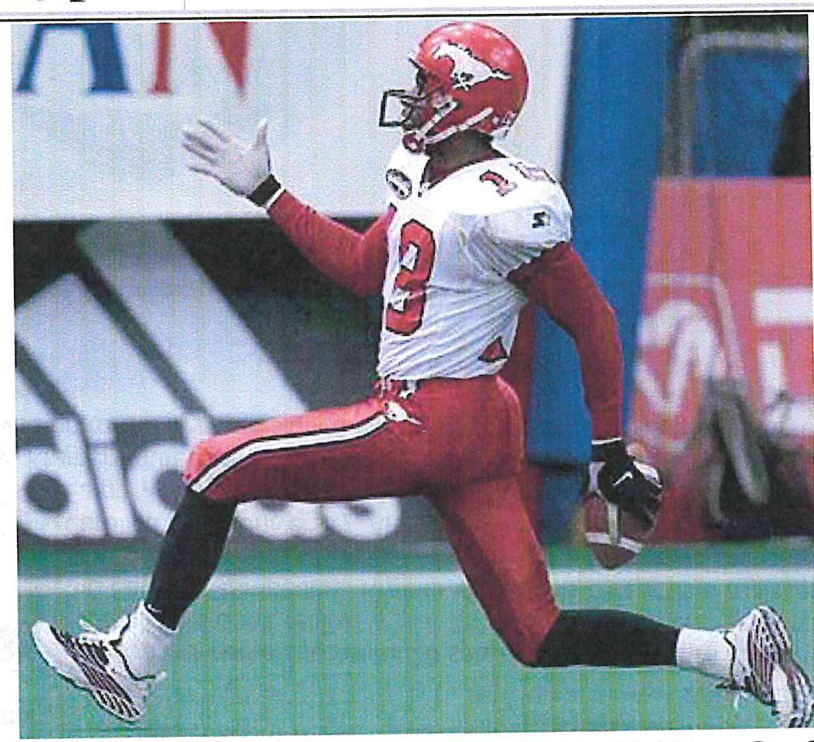
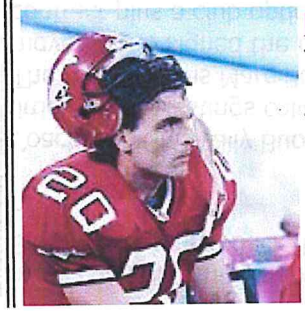
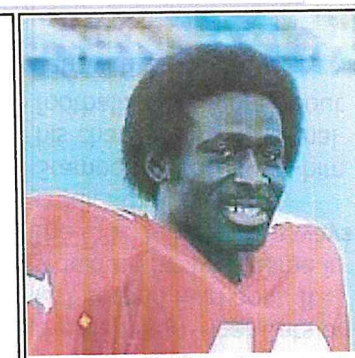


Allen Pitts is widely considered as the greatest receiver in CFL history. Roy Shivers signed the enigmatic California native to play with Calgary in 1990. Allen broke and set numerous records. In 1994 he had 2,036 receiving yards and 21 touchdowns, the best of his many spectacular seasons. A temperamental private individual off of the field; Allen always brought his best when the game was on. An incredible talent and a fantastic career. Read more about Allen here...



Doug Flutie spent the majority of his time in the CFL with the Calgary Stampeders. He was at the centre of one of the most dominant offensive attacks in CFL history. Over his four seasons with Calgary from 1992-95 he won 3 Most Outstanding Player awards. He led the team to two Grey Cups winning in 1992 over the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. His statistics were incredible he threw for over 6,000 yards passing in 1993 and a league record 48 touchdowns in 1994. While some contend he should have led the team to



Willie Burden was an exceptional running back for the Stampeders in the late 1970's and early 80's. Before Mike Pringle it was Burden who held the single season rushing record for 19 years. Burden rushed for 1,896 yards in 1975 in only 16 games as he went on to win the Most Outstanding Player award that year. Burden spent 8 hall-of-fame seasons with Calgary and was the lone bright spot on a number of struggling teams. Read more about Willie here...

more championships during his stay; no one can argue the dominance of Flutie as a Stampeder quarterback. Read more about Doug with the Calgary Stampeders here...

Coach and GM Wally Buono recruited a receiver out of little known Hastings college prior to the 2000 season. The receiver was Marc Boerigter and in a shrewd move Buono signed the unknown talent to a 2 year contract plus a club option. Boerigter proved to be an incredible find, the Nebraska native had 63 catches for 1,032 yards and 8 touchdowns in his rookie season. The NFL definitely took notice but Boerigter honoured his contract and returned to the Stampeders in 2001. He enjoyed another outstanding season capped with a TD reception in the Stampeders Grey Cup victory over Winnipeg. The game would prove to be his last in Canadian Football, as he went on to sign with the Kansas City Chiefs for the 2002 season. Read more about Marc here...

Erik Kramer had a successful 10 season career in the NFL. What many football fans don't realize is that Erik spent parts of two seasons with the Calgary Stampeders. Kramer started his career as a replacement player with the Atlanta Falcons in 1987 as a free agent out of North Carolina State University. After his release Kramer signed with the Calgary Stampeders in September 1988 and saw action in 5 games with Calgary. Kramer injured his knee in training camp in 1989 and missed the season. He moved on to the NFL and signed with Detroit in 1990. Read more about Erik here...

Jeff Garcia has gone on to have tremendous success in the NFL. Jeff joined Calgary in 1995 and was an instant hit that year replacing an injured Doug Flutie in the Labour Day Classic. Garcia went on to start for Calgary in 1996 and proved a quick study in the Canadian game. Quick feet a strong arm and clear determination Garcia continued the decade of excellence for Calgary culminating in the Grey Cup championship in 1998 over the Hamilton Tiger Cats on a last second field goal. It would be his final game in the CFL. Jeff Garcia always credits the Calgary Stampeders for giving him his chance in professional football. Read more about Jeff with Calgary here...

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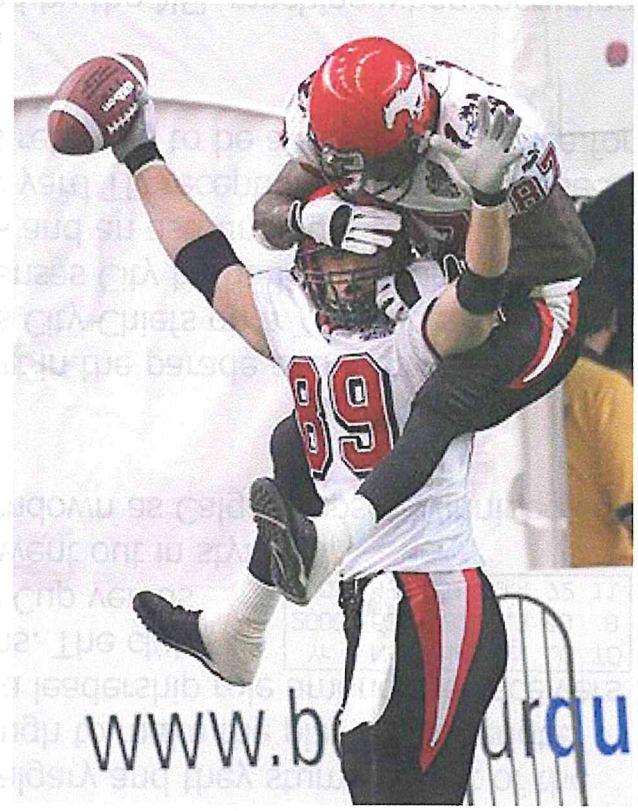
Marc Boerigter - Wide Receiver - 2000-01 - Hastings College



Marc Boerigter a 6'3" 215lb native of Sioux Center, Iowa attended NAIA Hastings College in Hastings, Nebraska. In 35 games for Hastings, he caught 93 passes for 1,902 yards (20.5 avg.) and 30 touchdowns. His 30 career touchdowns set a school record, while his 853 receiving yards as a senior were the best single-season total in school history. He was selected to the NIAC All-Conference team as a junior and senior.

Wally Buono and director of player personnel at the time for Calgary Bob O'Billovich recruited Boerigter after his four years of college. The duo saw definite talent in the young receiver. Calgary signed Boerigter to a 2 year deal plus a club option for a third season. The standard CFL contract is for 1 year plus the club option, but Buono and O'Billovich definately saw something they liked in Marc. Among established CFL veterans in Allen Pitts, Vince Danielson and Travis Moore, Boerigter still had an amazing season with Calgary. He caught 63 passes for 1,092 yards (17.3 avg.) and eight touchdowns in 2000, becoming the first rookie in team history to top the 1,000-yard receiving plateau in a season since Terry Vaughn in

1995.

The NFL definitely took notice but with his contract signed Boerigter returned to Calgary for the 2001 season. 2001 marked the retirement of both Danielson and Pitts. With the defection of Dave Dickinson to the NFL the club also had a new quarterback in Marcus Crandell. It was definitely a year of transition for Calgary and they stumbled out of the gate. An 8-10 regular season record was good enough to make the playoffs. Boerigter was a big part of the late season surge as he took a leadership role among the receivers he had 48 catches for 931 yards and 11 touchdowns. The club peaked at the right time and advanced to the Grey Cup versus favored Winnipeg. In his final CFL game Boerigter went out in style with 4 receptions for 114 yards and a decisive touchdown as Calgary upset Winnipeg 27-19 to capture the Grey Cup.

Yr	No.	Yds	Avg.	LG	TD
2000	63	1032	17.3	63	8
2001	48	931	19.4	72	11

Mark enjoyed the victory and celebration taking part in the parade and festivities in Calgary. That off-season he signed with the Kansas City Chiefs on a 7 year deal (7 years for salary cap purposes). In his first season with Kansas City he had great success as a third down option catching 20 passes for 420 yards and an astounding 8 touchdowns. Included in those 8 touchdowns is a club record 99 yard TD reception. Boerigter missed all of the 2003 season with various injuries but has returned to be a factor on offence for the Kansas City Chiefs.

The smaller schools in the U.S. are often overlooked by the NFL machine when recruiting players. A shining example of the talent that can be found is that of Marc Boerigter.

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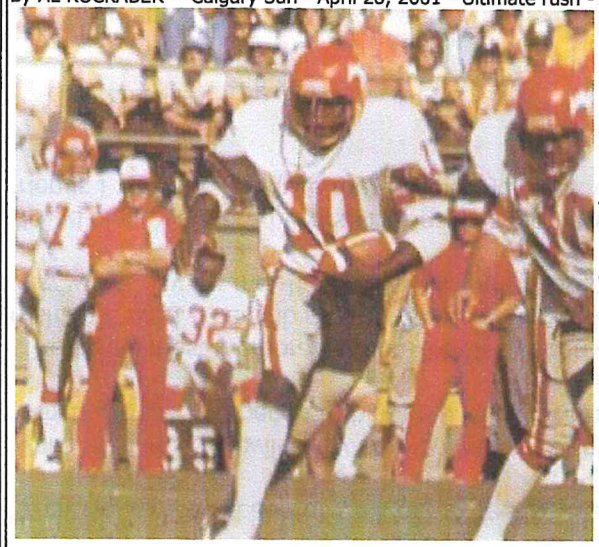
Willie Burden - Running Back- 1974-1982 - North Carolina State

By AL RUCKABER -- Calgary Sun - April 28, 2001 - Ultimate rush - Stamps great Willie Burden on his way to the hall



Back in 1974, Willie Burden rushed into the hearts and minds of the long-suffering Calgary Stampeders fans.

As a rookie running back out of North Carolina State, Burden joined a bad 6-10 team with little star power. In just six games, he rushed for 541 yards and finally gave the fans something to cheer about.

The next season, Burden would turn the league upside-down, rushing for a CFL all-time single season record 1,896 yards and winning the Schenley Award for most outstanding player.

During his eight-year Stampeders career (1974-1981), Burden rushed for 6,234 yards.

In 1982, the Stampeders retired Burden's No. 10 jersey. And in 1992, his name was placed on Stamps' Wall of Fame at McMahon Stadium.

But yesterday, the ultimate award was bestowed on Burden, as he made his last great rush -- straight to the Canadian Football Hall of Fame.

Burden was named along with QB Warren Moon (Edmonton), defensive end James (Quick) Parker (Edmonton, B.C.), offensive lineman Bill Frank (Winnipeg) and the late builder Sid Forster, as 2001 inductees.

Official induction ceremonies take place at Hamilton's Ivor Wynne Stadium at halftime of the Sept. 22 game between the Tiger-Cats and Stampeders.

Burden, 49, who is now an assistant professor of sports management at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Ga., felt deeply honoured but somewhat surprised at his induction.

"When I first came into the league, there were great players like Ron Lancaster and George Reed and I thought those were the real stars, players who were Hall of Fame material," Burden said from his home.

"But I never thought I'd be in their category. When I got the news, it was a very welcome surprise. I just wanted to shout out loud to the world that 'hey, I made it to the CFL Hall of Fame.'

"I hadn't thought about it much over the years. The people here in the south don't know how to equate what I achieved in the CFL. All they know is that I played and had some success. So, of course, there was never any talk about Hall of Fame and that sort of thing. I just thought it would be a longshot to make it. So, it's really a surprising, tremendous honour, something I will cherish for the rest of my life."

Actually, Burden thought he'd been all but forgotten, even in Calgary.

"I've been retired 20 years now and the Stampeders have had a lot of success since I've been gone, especially throughout the 1990s," said Burden, whose wife Velma also works at Georgia Southern, as the assistant registrar. They have three children -- Courtney (22), Willie Jr. (10) and Freddie (six).

"Now, the club has a lot of outstanding new players since my time and nobody knows about us old heads anymore."

Burden says the induction ceremonies in Hamilton will be extra special.

"That worked out beautifully. I'll get to see the Stampeders play and do some reminiscing."

While the induction will likely be the highlight of his football career, Burden says it would be hard to replace something that happened to him on a cold November day in 1975 at McMahon Stadium.

"The single most memorable moment of my football career was that day when I set the single-season rushing record. The club brought my mom up and all that. It was a very cold day but believe me, it was a very warm day for me. It's a day I will never forget.

"I had eight wonderful years in Calgary, a lot more than I expected. The great experiences and the lifelong friends I was able to make there, well, I just feel very lucky."

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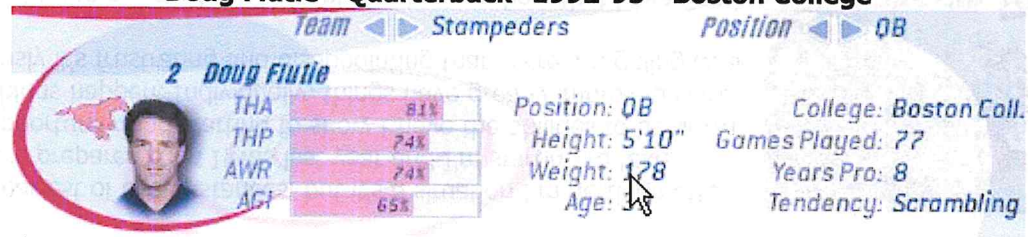
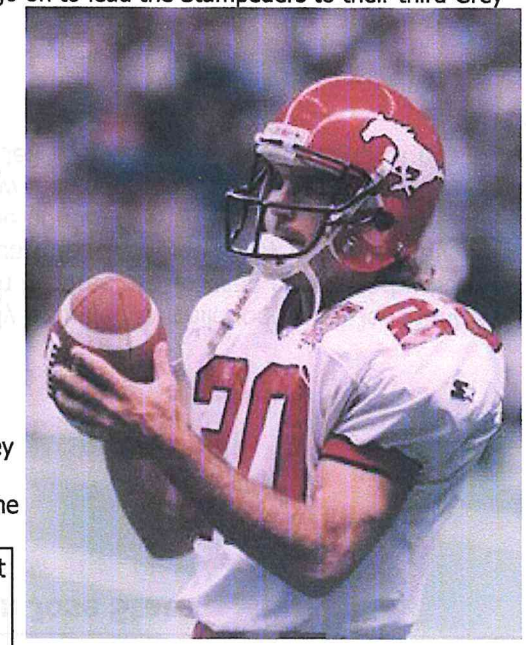
Doug Flutie - Quarterback- 1992-95 - Boston College



CFL - Legends - cfl.ca - excerpt

On March 23, 1992, Flutie signed with the Calgary Stampeders as a free agent and would go on to lead the Stampeders to their third Grey Cup Championship with an MVP performance in a 24-10 victory over the Winnipeg Blue Bombers. In the game, Doug completed 33 of 49 pass attempts for 480 yards and 2 touchdowns. It was Calgary's first Grey Cup Championship since 1971. He was named the Most Outstanding Player after the season for the second year in a row.



In 1993 and 1994 Doug had two more great seasons, earning the Most Outstanding Player Award after each season. Doug's amazing athleticism was not only displayed through the air, but on the ground as well. In fact in 1993, he tied for the CFL lead in rushing touchdowns with 11. He also eclipsed the 6,000-yard passing mark for the second time in his career. In 1994, Doug passed for a CFL record 48 touchdowns, completing the greatest statistical season in professional quarterbacking history as he would also rush for a career high 760 yards on only 96 attempts for a staggering 7.9 yards per carry average.

Doug's 1995 season proved to be the most difficult of his CFL career, as he was side- lined for 7-games with an elbow injury. He returned to action and led the Stampeders to the Grey Cup game only to lose to the Baltimore Stallions, the first and only time the Grey Cup championship would be presented to a US based team. Following a contract dispute with the StampedersÕ ownership, Doug joined the Toronto Argonauts on March 15, 1996.

However, there were some who still questioned Fluties ability and talent, focusing on the Stampeders receiving corps widely regarded as the best in the CFL with the likes of Allen Pitts, Vince Danielsen and Dave Sapunjis.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1992	Calg	688	396	5945	57.6	32	30
1993	Calg	703	416	6092	59.2	44	17
1994	Calg	659	403	5726	61.2	48	19
1995	Calg	332	223	2788	67.2	16	5

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Jeff Garcia - Quarterback- 1994-98 - San Jose State

Team ◄ ► Stampeders Position ◄ ► QB

5 Jeff Garcia

THA 95%
THP 90%
AWR 89%
AGI 64%

Position: QB
Height: 6'1"
Weight: 195
Age: 32

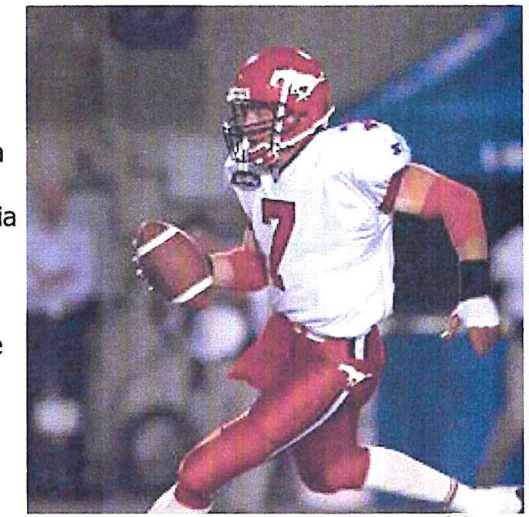
College: San Jose St.
Games Played: 45
Years Pro: 3
Tendency: Scrambling

By ERIC FRANCIS -- Calgary Sun - Sunday, October 29, 2000 Jeff's living a dream

SANTA CLARA, Calif. -- Sitting six lockers down from Jerry Rice, in a stall previously occupied by childhood hero Joe Montana, Jeff Garcia reflects on a journey that has landed him in a place he'd often visited in his dreams. Growing up in nearby Gilroy, Calif., he had patterned every pass, every mannerism after the legendary 49ers quarterback so good they named a state after him. Or so he was told. But only now, as his 6-ft. 1-in., 195-lb. frame shoulders the burden of trying to quarterback the San Francisco 49ers back to respectability, has Garcia been able to truly appreciate how monstrous his hero's shoes are. How hard it must have been for Steve Young to fill them before him. It is with that in mind, Jeff Garcia hesitates when asked if he's truly living his dream.

"In a lot of ways I am," said the 30-year-old slowly.

"I'm not dating any celebrities or anything ..." He laughs, his mind wanders, before returning to the question.



"It hasn't been the easiest of circumstances, but it's a situation I'm getting better at handling. I'm more prepared than I was last year and I'm starting to take advantage of this opportunity and starting to show I have the abilities to be down here and to make things happen. Individually, things have greatly improved since last year, but obviously it's frustrating and disappointing that we're struggling as a team."

Overshadowed by a 2-6 team record are brilliant passing numbers that have Garcia on pace to shatter several of Young's single-season franchise records. However, Bay Area fans and media have been cautious to anoint Garcia a hometown hero until the franchise is competitive again. Perhaps then he'll get his due. Driving around in a new Lincoln Navigator, making $320,000 US a year (plus considerable bonuses), Garcia is being rewarded, in a way, for winning previous battles for respect in Calgary and San Jose State. However, one thing he learned quickly as an NFLer is that there's precious little time during the season to rest on your laurels or savour the fruits of your labour.

"First of all, the money is all relative -- I still can't afford a house out here," chuckled Garcia, who made $150,000 Cdn his final few years as a Calgary Stampeder, only to lose $100,000 in his failed 4th St. restaurant, Garcia's.

"The lifestyle is definitely different. We have longer days. There's definitely a lot more expected out of each player based on the fact you're being paid such a high amount of money that you'd better be putting in the time, whether it's in film, the weight room or the practice field." Given only one day off a week -- Tuesday -- Garcia finds himself driving from his rented San Jose apartment to the 49ers practice facility in nearby Santa Clara before 8 a.m. every morning. He rarely leaves before five.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1994	Cal	3	2	10	66.7	0	0
1995	Cal	364	230	3358	63.2	25	7
1996	Cal	537	315	4225	58.7	25	16
1997	Cal	566	354	4573	62.5	33	14
1998	Cal	554	348	4276	62.8	28	15

"You're basically expected to come in on Tuesday as well to get a head start on what we're going to be doing that week," said Garcia, who enjoyed strolling into McMahon Stadium at noon most days.

"During the season, there's very little life outside football, whereas in Calgary there's a lot of life during the season and the off-season." A regular at several Calgary hotspots during his five-year apprenticeship with the Stamps, the laid-back Californian misses the relative anonymity of being a CFLer. He also misses his Canadian friends.

"I really enjoyed the lifestyle in Calgary," said Garcia, who counts only a few 49er teammates as close pals.

"I felt very comfortable there and had great support. It was really a fun city to be a part of. Out here it's different in many ways.

"The NFL is such a big-time business. You start to lose out on some of the fun of life and how football used to be. That's something I've had to fight hard to do -- keep this a fun game. Last year I wasn't having any. I really found last year I didn't see the comraderie amongst the players like I did in Calgary. It's such a business-like situation, there was such pressure being put on every individual that it really didn't seem like anybody took the time to enjoy themselves or get together as a team." After practice, each player heads his own way. And while he may never be as recognizable as Rice, Terrell Owens or Ken Norton Jr., Garcia is well aware of the fact he's a target in many ways.

"As far as notoriety goes, it grows with every game and everything I do publicly," said Garcia, whose freckled face and receding red hair make him easy to spot.

"People are recognizing me more and more throughout the area, but the city is so spread out. I find it hard to be out with my friends in a social setting because of the personal attention that is received. I so much want to be out there like everybody else and not worrying about things, but I really have to kind of watch what I do because I'm under the microscope. That changes the social scene."

Things should change even more next week when the relative unknown will be featured in Sports Illustrated, the Bible of sports journalism. His profile was also boosted recently when John Madden openly praised Garcia for his toughness during a nationally televised game. Crediting his CFL experience with getting him to where he is today, Garcia's NFL success has done well to promote the CFL's virtues much the same way a former teammate of his has done.

"Doug (Flutie) helped me in my success in the CFL and I really believed he opened the door for me here," said Garcia, who backed up Flutie for two years.

"The success he had that first year with Buffalo really brought a lot of attention to the CFL and some of the talent playing in that league. Without his success down here, I really don't know if this opportunity opens up for me."

The Garcia family's relationship with 49ers GM Bill Walsh was key to landing Garcia a deal in San Francisco. Following his Grey Cup MVP performance in 1998, Garcia worked out for several teams before the Miami Dolphins made him his first NFL offer. However, when the possibility of signing for a team that plays 90 minutes from his hometown came up, he wasted little time signing a two-year deal with a modest signing bonus. The team has an option for next year but Garcia hopes he can come to terms on a long-term deal that would undoubtedly command a minimum of several million dollars a year. Given the nature of pro sports contracts and the fact he leads the league with 21 touchdown passes, he'll undoubtedly be set for life with his next deal.

"Obviously I've seen some of the quarterbacks out there in this league that have been paid remarkable amounts of money and yet aren't doing nearly what I'm doing on the field," said Garcia, who was thrilled to return from Mexico last winter to find an unexpected cheque of $175,000 for bonuses.

"That gets me excited about the possibilities and options that are going to be out there in the off-season."

Still the same soft-spoken, approachable athlete he's always been, it would be easy for Garcia to get swept up in the overwhelming changes in his life. However, instead of walking around with stars in his eyes, he continues to keep his sights set on improving and proving critics wrong. He'll fight through the criticism the same way he fought through the pain of losing a brother and sister within 14 months while he was just six -- with heart and determination, something Garcia shows plenty of every time he hits the field.

"Last year I was more in awe of the situation," he said.

"Especially when I was going to start my first game, I thought about having my name called out, running through the helmet and running out in front of a hometown crowd. As I was driving up to 3Com Park (nee Candlestick) I was just pumped. I couldn't wait. I'm used to the situation now."

Garcia continues to stay in touch with several Stamps teammates and hopes to spend his bye weekend in Calgary for the Grey Cup. To put his rapid ascent in perspective, the exact same time Calgary and Montreal kick off their Grey Cup preview at McMahon Stadium today, Garcia will lead the 49ers against the defending Super Bowl champs. Yes, a lot has changed for the small- town kid with the big dreams.

What hasn't changed is Jeff Garcia.

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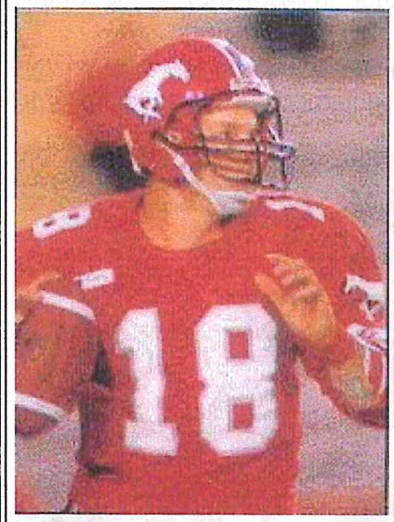
Erik Kramer - Quarterback - 1988-89 - North Carolina State



Erik Kramer graduated out of North Carolina State University. He started his professional career signing with the New Orleans Saints in 1987 as a free agent, he was released by the Saints on August 31, 1987. From there Kramer was signed by the Atlanta Falcons as a replacement player during the players strike of 1987. Erik started all 4 strike games for Atlanta. Following the resolution of the strike he was released.

From there Kramer signed on with the Calgary Stampeders in September of 1988. He saw action in 5 games for Calgary throwing for 5 touchdowns but also 13 interceptions. He returned for training camp in 1989 ready to challenge with Tom Porras and Terrence Jones for starting quarterback duties but he injured his knee in training camp and missed the entire 1989 season. Kramer was released outright from the club and thus ended his stay in Canadian Football.

Kramer then moved on to the NFL signing with the Detroit Lions in 1990 from there in 1991 and beyond he established himself as a reliable starting quarterback. He enjoyed his best season in 1995 with Chicago passing for 3,838 yards and 29 touchdowns with only 10 interceptions.

Erik's final season was in 1999 when he filled in for an ineffective Ryan Leaf with the San Diego Chargers. From a replacement player to disappointing totals in the Canadian Football League to an established starting quarterback in the NFL Erik Kramer proved that persistence can pay off in professional football.

Yr	Att	Cmp	Pct.	Yds	LG	TD	Int
1988	153	62	40.5	964	62	5	13

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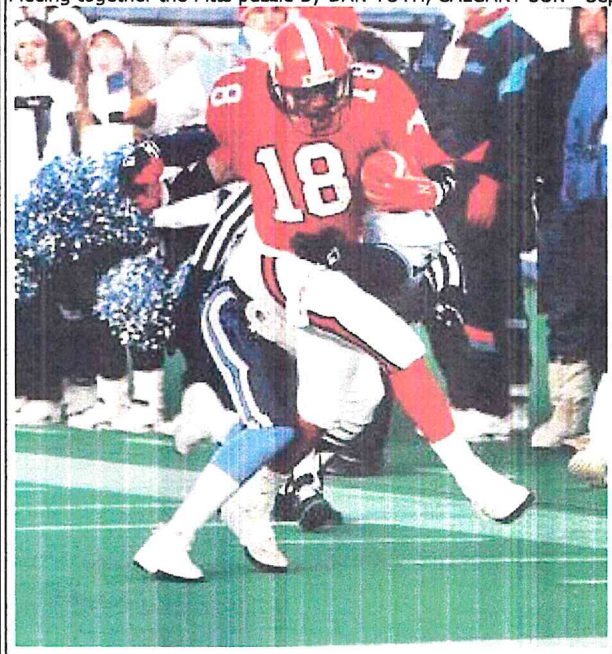
Allen Pitts - Wide Receiver- 1990-2001 - Cal State Fullerton

Piecing together the Pitts puzzle By DAN TOTH, CALGARY SUN - September 5, 2004



All Stampeder fans know of Allen Pitts. Between 1990 and 2000, the receiver recorded his name throughout the team's -- and the league's -- record books. That's why his name will be added to McMahon Stadium's Wall of Fame during halftime of tomorrow's Labour Day Classic. Although many know of Pitts, very few people actually know him.

This reserved and sometimes reclusive athlete remained a mystery man from the time he arrived in Cowtown to the time he left the city and the CFL upon his release four years ago. Sun football writer Dan Toth talks to the people who know Pitts best to try to piece together a picture of a man who's widely admired by many but known by so few.

- - -

Bright, sullen, outgoing, introverted, talented, tormented and ultimately misunderstood. While Allen Pitts' brilliance on the football field was easily defined, describing him outside the white lines is almost as difficult as it was defending against him.

The former Stamps receiver dominated the CFL in the 1990s while also grabbing hold of the league record books. But many of the men who knew him best -- his teammates and coaches -- are still bewildered when trying to define the sure-handed No. 18.

"I probably knew Allen as well as anybody," notes former Stampeders head coach-GM Wally Buono, who released the 11-year veteran after the 2000 season.

"He was a private person and he had his upside and downside. He had a serious side and a goofy side. The thing about Allen was he was a competitor with a tremendous desire to get better and it was never good enough in his mind.

Yr	No	Yds	Avg.	TD
1990	65	1172	18.0	6
1991	118	1764	14.9	15
1992	103	1591	15.4	13
1993	45	776	17.2	4
1994	126	2036	16.2	21
1995	100	1492	14.9	11
1996	86	1309	15.2	11
1997	53	885	16.7	9
1998	96	1372	14.3	11
1999	97	1449	14.9	10
2000	77	1045	13.6	6

"He was one of the biggest jokesters on the team and at other times he was as sullen as could be, so that was Allen. When he stepped on the field he was consistent, worked his butt off and always tried to get better and always tried to get more out of himself. As consistent as he was on the field, his personality was that much different."

Buono had the dual role of not only coaching Pitts but helping him through a variety of off-field problems both in Calgary and back home in California. Pitts, who is currently involved in a construction business in Los Angeles, had struggles away from the game that were often an issue but never as serious as reported, claims Buono.

"You loved him for what he was and you put up with what he was because he was a great player but down deep you knew he had a desire to succeed and get better which never confused you," Buono says. "We all have quirks about ourselves and any time he had something to deal with (off the field) it was dealt with and we moved on. We had off-field issues with a lot of players but Allen's were always blown out of proportion because it was Allen Pitts."

"He'd give you the shirt off his back if you needed it," insists former teammate and coach Danny Barrett.

"He went through some tough times at the end of his career and it made him work just that much harder to get back to the top."

Barrett admits Pitts occasionally appeared aloof but it was his withdrawn nature off the field simply misinterpreted by others.

"I think so but that's not the way he was at all," claims Barrett, who threw Pitts the ball as a quarterback and later coached him.

"If you approached Allen and got talking to him, he was a kind, gentle human being with a kind heart, a good heart. He always wanted to do what was right and what was best.

"A lot of times people tend to want to get close to you for the wrong reasons and I always felt he was a little leery of that. You can't blame him or anybody else. For the right reasons he'd befriend anybody. Once you got to know him the guy was unmatched, I'll tell you that. I'm happy to see he's being honoured by the Stampeders."

Former Stamps receiver Vince Danielsen (1994-01), who won a Grey Cup with Pitts in 1998, says his former teammate was a great leader on the field but a difficult person to grow close to away from the game.

"One thing with Allen was I didn't think I really knew him that well," Danielsen acknowledges. "He was a little bit more to himself. When it came to doing things outside the football arena, we didn't see him that much. There were guys he had closer relationships with but I didn't have that with him. After my third year, I'd had a good year and the next year I went to lunch with him and I was searching for his help and I really remember him coming to the table with a lot of support. Even though he wasn't a guy who was

outgoing, if you went to him for help, he was there for you.

"He wasn't an outward guy in the locker-room, he was more to himself but he was always a professional."

Danielsen, who has since become a successful businessman in Calgary, laments Pitts' inability to put down roots in the city and make a career here after football.

"He was misunderstood, for sure," Danielsen says. "Some of the things that happened through the media ... I think he shut the media out and that's never a great thing to do. If you're not going to talk they're going to write what they want. That's too bad and I hated to see how he left the game. He deserved better on all sides.

"That said, I'm happy he's being honoured (tomorrow) because we have to throw all that other stuff aside and ... it's time to celebrate a person who really was one of the greatest players in Stampeders history."

Former Stamps offensive co-ordinator George Cortez worked as closely with Pitts as anyone. He says he knew the player well but never the man inside the uniform.

"He didn't live in town in the off-season and the guys you get to know best were the one's that stayed in Calgary in the off-season," Cortez says.

"I can't say I got to know him very well.

"The one thing about those teams through the '90s, and Allen is the personification of that, is the tremendous pride in what they did. One thing you could always depend on if we didn't play very well is the next week we were going to play great and Allen led that.

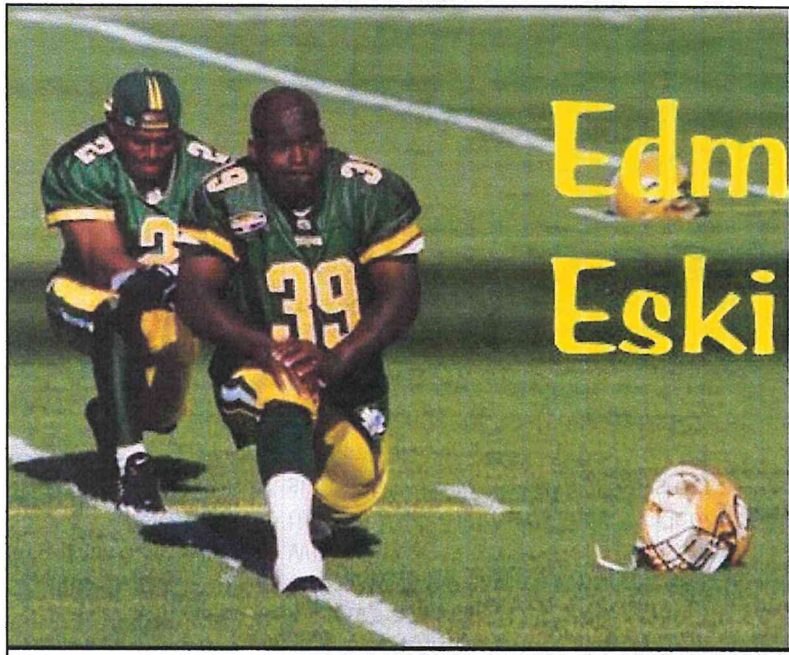
"He wanted the ball and there's something to say for that."

Buono says releasing Pitts before the 2001 season was a difficult decision, based primarily on finances and the receiver's declining skills.

"When time starts catching up to great players like Allen Pitts, you can't ease them out because there isn't room on the rosters to do that," Buono says. "You have to do an about face and turn your back on them which is a sad commentary but its the reality and it's never a pleasant thing.

"With Allen, whether you liked him or didn't like him, as a contributor to the Calgary Stampeders I haven't personally seen anyone greater."

Coming from Buono, that might be the most important description of all.



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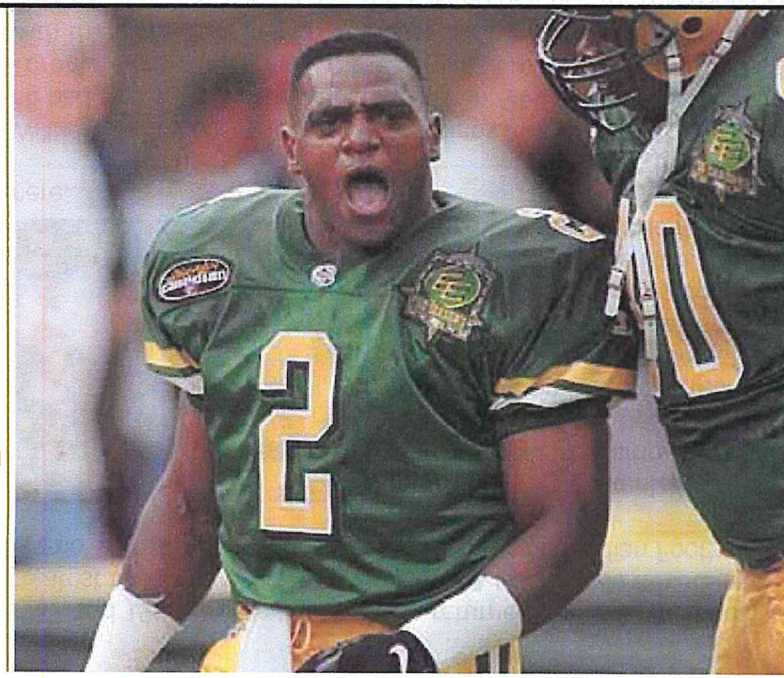

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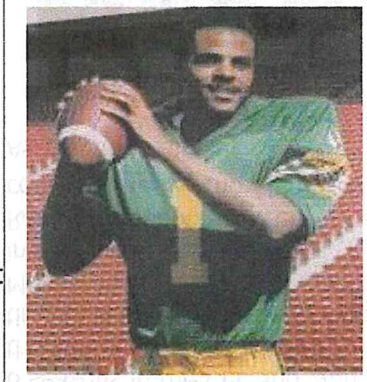
Henry "Gizmo" Williams spent 14 seasons with the Green & Gold. Without a doubt the greatest return man in the history of the Canadian Football League, Williams holds numerous records that may never be broken. Over his incredible career he had a spectacular 26 punt return touchdowns. He won the



Any look at all-time Eskimos must include Warren Moon. The exploits of Moon in professional football are unrivaled. Moon started his professional career with Edmonton from the University

1970'S
1980'S
1990'S

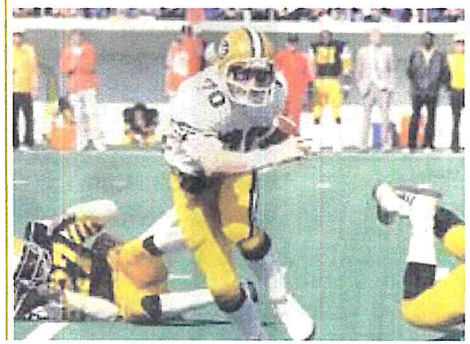
Grey Cup

Index

Grey Cup with Edmonton in 1987 and 1993. In the '87 game he returned a missed field goal 115 yards for one of the greatest touchdowns in league history. A remarkable athlete and role model in the community 'Gizmo' is truly one of the all-time legends of Canadian Football. Read more about Henry here...

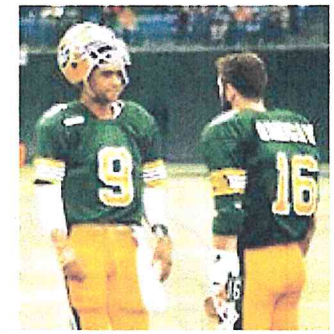
Danny Kepley epitomized the Eskimo defense during the teams unprecedented championship run in the late 1970's and early 1980's. His tough, determined and relentless demeanor had a big impact on the entire team. Dan was the anchor of the formidable Alberta Crude defence, he poured his heart into the Green & Gold for 10 seasons. A lasting figure in the history of Eskimo football; Kepley continues his legacy with the club to this today as a defensive coach. Read more about Dan and his break-neck style by Ron Cheribini of East Carolina University here...

Willie Pless joined the Edmonton Eskimos in 1991 from the B.C.Lions, he had already established himself as an All-star in the league first with Toronto having been named the leagues top rookie in 1986 and then with the Lions. It was with Edmonton however, where Willie had his greatest success. The face of the Eskimo defence for 8 seasons Willie was a perennial All-Star, he captured the leagues top defensive honours a record 5 times. He lead the defence in Edmonton to Grey Cup appearances in 1994 and 1996 capturing the trophy in 1994. When Willie retired in 2002 after a season with Saskatchewan he finished as the leagues all-time leading tackler. The Kansas Jayhawk product was a superstar. Willie's motor never stopped and his agility, speed and tackling prowess have cemented his status as one of the all-time greats to play Canadian Football. Willie was elected to the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 2005. Read more about Willie here...



Brian Kelly set numerous receiving records over his lengthy career with Edmonton. The Washington State product was the primary receiver for the Eskimos dynasty. Fearless over the middle with the knack for the big catch at the right time Kelly endeared himself to a generation of Eskimo fans. Brian known as "howdy doody" for his youthful appearance was as sure-handed and as clutch a performer as any other receiver in CFL history. He left the game as the all-time receiving yardage leader in league history. While his totals have

of Washington. Having been overlooked in the NFL draft as a quarterback, Moon came to Edmonton. He learned behind starter Tom Wilkinson on the greatest dynasty in Canadian Football History. Warren spent 6 seasons in the CFL and won the Grey Cup a remarkable 5 times. He captured the league Most Outstanding Player award in his final season in 1983. Read more about Warren courtesy the Eskimo Alumni Association here...



Damon Allen won two Grey Cups with Edmonton in two seperate stays with the club. Allen entered the league in 1985 with Edmonton. He spent 3 seasons backing up Matt Dunigan. In the 1987 Grey Cup Allen came off the bench to lead Edmonton to a 38-36 Grey Cup victory over Toronto. Allen returned to the Eskimos in 1993 and went on the lead the team to a 33-23 Grey Cup Championship over Winnipeg. A true big-game performer

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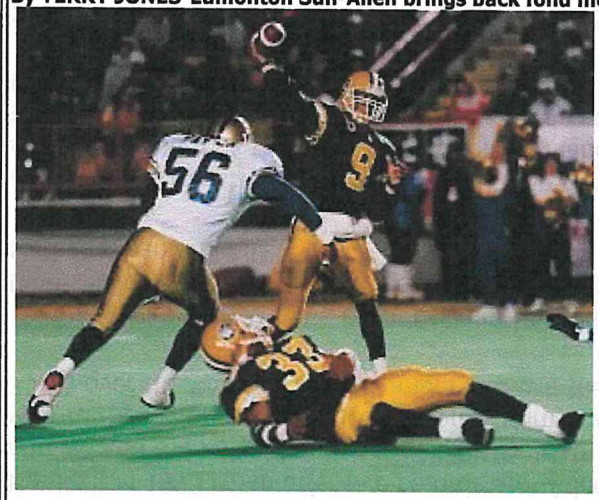
Damon Allen - Quarterback - 1985-88, 93-94 - Cal State Fullerton

By TERRY JONES-Edmonton Sun-Allen brings back fond memories-August 18,2005



When we last left the Toronto Argos they'd just won the Grey Cup, and MVP Damon Allen was wandering through the media workroom shaking the hands of a couple of veteran scribes from Edmonton who were there when he started his career.

It was like he'd decided he was probably playing his last year and going out on top with another Grey Cup, the fourth of his career.

But he's back at age 42 for his 21st season and the umpteenth annual Damon Allen Farewell Tour, which plays the city where it all began back when Marcus Allen's little brother came north to Edmonton to play for the Eskimos.

The question is if this will be the final time you watch Allen play where he began his career? Will he be the Satchel Paige or Gordie Howe of football and go on almost forever, if he hasn't actually done that already?

One thing's for sure. The Argo faithful certainly aren't screaming to get rid of the old fart. In fact, the scream last week was why head coach Pinball Clemons chose to rest Allen's injured ankle and then throw him in when the score was 14-0 for Montreal at the half.

Football fans, for some strange reason, usually find themselves more fond of the young back-up than the aging veteran in the CFL.

But in Toronto, at the half, with young Michael Bishop six-for-11, the Argo boo birds were out.

Allen put together a pair of series to make it a 15-10 game at one point. It turned out to be an 18-10 loss to the Als, but Allen went 21 for 30 in the second half, despite his ankle injury, to set himself up for the trip to

Edmonton with an exclamation mark instead of a question mark.

And as he heads here, Allen will be finding a new focus for his career - that of moving closer to breaking ex-Eskimo Warren Moon's all-pro football career record of 70,553 passing yards in his 23 pro seasons, the first six in the CFL with Edmonton.

Allen goes into tonight's game 4,289 shy of the mark and has a good chance to break it next season if he chooses to play another one.

Hey, if you're that close ...

Until Ricky Ray won one for the Eskimos in 2002, Allen was twice the answer to the name of the quarterback who last piloted the Eskimos to the Grey Cup.

He did it in 1993 when offensive co-ordinator Adam Rita brought the so-called "Sally Rand" out of mothballs and worked the naked bootleg for all it was worth to turn a less-than-sensational season into a championship year for head coach Ron Lancaster. The Eskimos won their final eight straight, including the Grey Cup game 33-23 over the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, to win their 11th title. Allen was voted Grey Cup MVP.

That was Allen's second life as an Eskimo. His first was back when, following the departure of Warren Moon, the Eskimos were churning quarterbacks out for the rest of the league like crazy with the likes of Tracy Ham, Matt Dunigan and Allen.

Dunigan was the starter in the 1987 Grey Cup game for the Eskimos, but was injured. It was Allen who stepped in and took the team to the promised land for 10 of their now 12 Grey Cup titles in the 56-year history of the league's flagship franchise. Allen was named Grey Cup offensive player of the game in the Eskimos' 38-36 win over the Argos.

He also won a Grey Cup with the B.C. Lions in 2000.

Allen goes into Saturday night's game against the Eskimos as the CFL record holder for most pass attempts - 8,426; most pass completions - 4,717; most all-time passing yards - 64,496; and most passing touchdowns - 360.

He had a solid first third of the schedule with a efficiency rating of 108.2, second only to Dave Dickenson's 117.2. He was fourth to Ray in passing yards with 154 completions in 239 attempts for 2,024 yards and 14 touchdown passes against only four interceptions.

Those are not the stats of an oldest-player-in-the-league, washed-up, ready-to-call-it-a-career quarterback.

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Brian Kelly - Wide Receiver - 1979-87 - Washington State University

Yr	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
1979	61	1098	18.0	80	11
1980	48	922	19.2	89	9
1981	74	1665	22.5	91	11
1982	46	801	17.4	56	8
1983	104	1812	17.4	48	11
1984	66	1310	19.9	85	18
1985	59	1034	17.5	54	6
1986	49	901	18.4	65	10
1987	68	1628	23.9	97	13

Affectionately known as "Howdy Doody", the 5'9" Kelly was an exceptionally intelligent receiver during his nine-year career (1979-1987). Brian caught 575 passes for a then CFL record 11,169 yards and scored 586 points. His 97 career touchdowns are currently fourth on the CFL's all-time list. He had his name added to the Eskimos Wall of Fame in 1989 and was elected to the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1991.

The 5-foot-9 wide receiver teamed with Jack Thompson and Mike Levenseller in the late 1970s to make WSU's passing attack one of the most feared in the nation. His 116 catches

from 1975-77 still rank him in the WSU career top 10. He went on to spend nine seasons in the CFL with Hugh Campbell's Edmonton Eskimos. Earned CFL rookie of the year honors in 1978 and was a perennial all-CFL pick. Caught 575 passes for a CFL record 11,169 yards and 97 career touchdowns --- second only to George Reed's 137 career TDs. The Eskimos won six Grey Cup titles during his career, including his first and last seasons.

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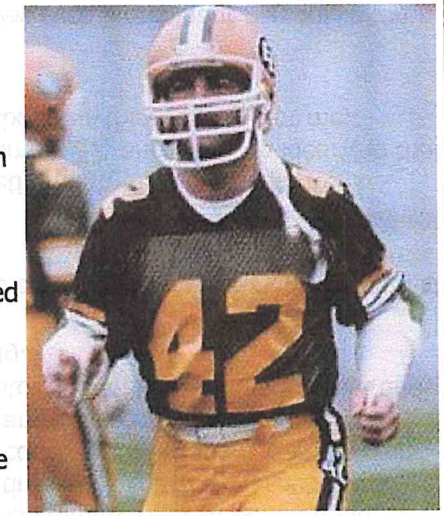
Danny Kepley - Linebacker - 1975-85 - East Carolina University

Cap'n Crunch was one of the wildest of the Wild Dogs
By **Ron Cherubini** ©2004 Bonesville.net



On the outside, Danny Kepley was always hailed as a vicious hitter, the biggest, baddest dog in the famed East Carolina Wild Dog defenses of the early 1970s.

So bad, that the Quaker Oats Company should have been paying him an endorsement fee, as it was common on Fall Saturdays in Greenville for local grocery stores to be running short of the popular cold cereal.

The cereal boxes were off the shelf and in the stands at Ficklen, fastened to the ends of yardsticks and mop handles in makeshift banners of support for the Pirate linebacker who terrorized Southern Conference offenses.

On the outside, Kepley was a player who never lacked confidence, as he owned the space between the sidelines, every bit the Associated Press All-America he would become as a Pirate.

On the inside... on the inside, Cap'n Crunch was driven by the notion that he was not good enough for the big time. The University of North Carolina was not interested... in fact, no other Division I school save East Carolina was interested in the 185-pound running back and safety from Goldsboro High School.

Yet... from Goldsboro High School, he made his way to Greenville and achieved superstar status at East Carolina and within the Southern Conference and then carved himself a permanent spot in the Canadian Football League Hall of Fame.

His six championship rings, his hall of fame status, and his lofty position as one of the most recognizable athletes in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada history are testament that he was certainly good enough. Always was... still is.

When the Edmonton Eskimos defeated the Montreal Alouettes 34-22 in November, Kepley added another ring to his collection – his seventh. This time, it was his first as a coach. Kepley, today, is in his second year as an assistant coach with his former team – appropriately mentoring the linebackers.

He has worked past the pain – the deepest in his experience – of leaving the only life he knew — the one as a player. He has hobbled through the sadness of a divorce, and he has put behind him alcohol-related legal troubles to emerge where he had always best functioned — football heaven.

Kep is happy now... way happy. The coaching has taken root and he can once again be within eyeshot of a gridiron without feeling a wrenching in his gut. Yet, he is grappling to make the transition from player to coach almost two decades removed from his playing days.

"I'm still trying to figure out this winning... as a coach," Kepley said. "I didn't know what to do. As a player, you just find the first bottle of champagne and go out and have a good time. As a coach, I was watching these young guys jumping up and down. I had lost (the Grey Cup) as a coach last year and it was the worst. I'd rather take an ass kicking than lose. I sat back watching the players and coaches that had never won before. I was watching our offensive coordinator and defensive coordinator... to watch their excitement and know in your heart that you had something to do with it is very satisfying."

Satisfaction took a long, hard path back home for Kepley, who went into a depression of sorts after having to hang up his cleats in 1985.

"It was the hardest decision I ever had to make in my life," he said of retirement. "The morning after I retired, I looked in the mirror and I saw just Danny Kepley instead of number 42, and I had no idea who that man was. I didn't know how to act. I didn't have an idea of how to go about anything, really. For me, football had been my entire life."

That life... that football life, was one that all Pirates cherish, as Kepley was such a dominant personality on and off the field at East Carolina that even the mention of him stirs up football feelings in Pirate country. He was as equally hailed as a downtown patron as he was a player, as Kepley never let the engine idle. He was a wild dog, 24-7.

From Goldsboro to Greenville

Even as a 156-pound junior in high school, Kepley knew one thing for sure: he loved to hit. Football allowed him to hit and be revered for it. Still, bulking up to 185 by his senior season didn't draw a flock of recruiters from Division I universities. In fact, it was a flock of one.

"The honest part is that East Carolina was the only team that offered me a scholarship," Kepley said. "They

gave me an opportunity.

"I was born in Albermarle and my dad was a military guy," he said. "Thankfully, dad being transferred all over the place – from Hampton, VA, at Langley, over to Hawaii at Hickam (air base) and then back to Seymour-Johnson in Goldsboro – exposed me to so many well-coached and well-organized programs as far as sports were concerned. My dad and mom and brother David – who also went to ECU as an offensive lineman – were my greatest fans.

"(Goldsboro) played at (Greenville) Rose a few times, but that was about the only time I was in Greenville (before college). I knew nothing about the school, but I did know that these people were going to give me a chance to play football. Honestly, the school could have been in Timbuktu."

Originally, Kepley was expected to play running back for the Pirates, but a rash of injuries to the linebacking corps changed those plans and in turn expedited Kepley's path to playing time.

"(Assistant coach) George Rose asked me if I wanted to try linebacker," Kep recalled. "I didn't give a s***, I wanted to be on the field, so I said, 'Alright.' At first, I was not so excited, but then I saw some of those young brothers who could turn a 4.4 (in the 40 yard dash)."

Kepley took to his new position on the freshman squad.

"Fortunately for me, the one thing that was inbred in me – which I didn't know at the time – was that I always wanted to hit... to stick my nose in places where it shouldn't go. The coaching (I received) and (the love for contact) married up pretty nicely together."

Kepley recalls a great time at East Carolina.

"It was a terrific place," he said. "ECU, I think what little bit we did see the campus, it was good. Obviously, the ratio of women to men made it extremely exciting. It was a nice campus."

Kepley admitted that football was the primary motivation at ECU, not campus. Kepley flourished in the football-first environment and acknowledges that his greatness on the field was only the result of the support he received from his coaches and teammates.

"At that time, Coach Rose was the head coach (of the freshman team) and then... we moved up and Sonny Randle came in my sophomore year," Kepley said. "Being able to play with the older guys. Jim Post took me under his wing and took me further (as a player). The defensive coordinator was Carl Reece, the bulldog, who (until recently was) the defensive coordinator at the University of Texas. He was also the linebacker coach. He is a man that really did educate me about football. Things like reading keys and straight lines

going to places.

"I think I was a student of the game. The more I realized that I wasn't the most physically intimidating kind of linebacker, the more I realized that I had to be smarter. Six-foot, 205 pounds doesn't scare many people (at the collegiate level). I had to study film and anticipate what people were going to do. It was certainly one of the keys for me."

As time would bear out, however, Kepley's name did intimidate and the results of a taste of Cap'n Crunch often proved ugly for the crunchee.

He admired his varsity coach in Randle, a man with a reputation that Kepley understood.

"Coach Randle was a very, very unique man," Kepley chuckled. "I would bet there were more stories about him than the players during that time."

But that freedom to be wild was perfect for Kepley and it paid immediate dividends for the Pirates.

As a freshman in 1971, he was named to the Southern Conference all frosh team.

"I was... I was surprised at my success at ECU," he said. "Even more so now because I have an understanding of team sports that I didn't have then. Success is never made alone. I was surrounded by very good players. Guys like Butch Strawderman and Billy Hibbs. Defensive lineman like Kenny Moore and Buddy 'Big'un' Lowery and Jimmy Bolding. Don Shenk at fullback and Mike Shea at receiver. The kind of guys that make you look good."

The championship over William & Mary was a huge moment for the Kepley as a Pirate.

"I can remember when we won the Southern and we played William & Mary," he said. "Lou Holtz was their coach, though his name didn't mean as much then as it does now. But I remember watching our team. I remember Jim Post was so hurt and was gutting it up so much. He could barely run, but he was not going to come off the field. I remember the tears in his eyes. That's how we all were. It was amazing."

He also recalled another moment involving Holtz.

"We played State on national television and got our butts kicked," he said. "But to show you what a small world the football world is, our head coach here in Edmonton, my boss, Tom Higgins, played at N.C. State ahead of a guy named (Bill) Cowher. I was named the Defensive Player of the Game in a losing cause. Four days later, I got a letter from Coach Holtz about my play on the field. That letter meant a tremendous amount to me."

He was as impressive a linebacker as ever wore the purple and gold.

Though Kepley was one of a talented group, his name more than many evokes the memory of the famed Wild Dog defense that dominated the Southern Conference in the early '70s.

"It was amazing," Kepley recalled. "Coach John Madlock coined that phrase. He was100 percent in your face and he once told us that we were going to 'cover this f***ing thing like a pack of wild dogs' and (the moniker) stuck. It was great to be part of that. We were in the top two or three in the nation."

Kepley and the rest of the Wild Dogs brought home the Southern Conference title in 1972 and 1973 and number 42 was named to the All-Southern Conference team in each of his three seasons on the varsity club. Though they did not win it in '74, Kepley recalls that year as being pivotal for him as a player.

"My senior year, obviously, was a very important year for me," he said. "Being slightly more mature, which I suppose was debatable — I was more mature, at least, as a football player. But being able at the end of the year to know that you were an AP all-America; to realize that you are one of the best nine linebackers in the country. You go, 'Holy s***!'. Those are the things that you never think of happening, but when it does happen, your realize that your teammates helped you get there."

The all-America status was huge validation for Kepley, who always measured himself against the standards the naysayers said he would never reach.

"Quite honestly, you hear enough through the course of your life that you are too small... you hear enough people telling you that, it gets to you," Kepley said of his doubters. "Every time I stepped on the field, it was to prove somebody wrong... to make a few more believers."

That year, his senior year, a change in regime at East Carolina was under way. Outgoing was the idiosyncratic Sonny Randle and incoming was the up-and-coming Pat Dye. Many times, regime change leads to instant assessments of starters and in many cases, personnel changes. But for Kepley, who admired Randle, Dye represented a necessary ingredient for the Pirates middle linebacker.

"Pat was a very, very great coach and man," Kepley recalled. "When he arrived, we had a linebacker coach named Frank Orgle. (Dye) didn't change things. (Dye) made (the great defense) a little better."

Kepley held Dye in high esteem and the coach was able to help his star linebacker prepare for the next step.

As NFL pundits passed out the "too small" judgment on Kepley, it became obvious that the all-America linebacker would have to earn his way into a camp in the league.

"My senior year, the same thing happened," Kepley recalled. "(NFL gurus) were saying, 'You're undersized.' I knew I was pretty quick, but I did not have the stature. I was not 6-2, 6-3."

Still, Kepley had a few fans in the NFL. Legendary Dallas Cowboy corner back and five-time pro bowler Cornell Green (1963-74) took note of Kepley and let the linebacker know that the Cowboys were very interested in him.

"I remember him telling me to be patient during the draft," Kepley said. "But I never got the call. Those two days were the most devastating two days in my career (at that point)."

Undrafted, Kepley was not sure what he was going to do, but then Brown showed up at East Carolina looking for Kep.

"Green came to ECU and met with Coach Dye to talk about me," he said. "And I signed a free agent contract. Coach Dye actually talked me through the whole contract. There wasn't much negotiation. I signed a three-year deal worth $16,000, $18,000, and $20,000. I remember they gave me a $1,000 signing bonus and I can tell you that when the check arrived, it was $729 dollars and something. I called Cornell and said, 'You said you were going to give me a $1,000.' He said, 'Yes.' And I said, 'No sir, it was $729.' Cornell laughed and said, 'Danny, we got to take out the income tax.'

"I was upset. I said, 'you promised me $1,000.' I remember thinking, 'Damn, (ECU running back great) Les Strayhorn (who was with the Cowboys at the time) bought a new car and I got $729. I did buy a car, though. I bought a 1974 white Corvette Stingray. It cost me $6,000 at the time and I borrowed some money at the bank. My Godfather, Ule Gambella, lent me money, also."

The NFL Experience

Kepley knew it would not be easy for him to stick in Dallas, considering that while he waited for two days during the draft never to hear his name called, the Cowboys were picking linebackers. Hall of Famer Randy White was the number two overall pick followed by Tom "Hollywood" Henderson and Bob Breunig. If that weren't enough competition, Kepley also knew that Lee Roy Jordan, D.D. Lewis, and Dave Edwards were all in the lineup.

Still, that cast offered a glimmer of hope and motivation for Kepley.

"I thought I had a chance," he said. "I saw their sizes – all undersized – and thought I would have an opportunity."

But, agonizingly, the Turk did visit Kepley at the bitter end of camp.

"It came down to being the last guy cut in 1975," he said. "It was between me and Hollywood Henderson."

For all of his success in college, Kepley could not help but feel defeated.

"It hurt bad," he said. "It was the first time in my life that I suffered defeat. I was cut from a ball club. It hurt. But, the great thing about that experience still to this day, and I like to say and have the honor to say that one of the coaches there who took me under his wing was Coach Dan Reeves. He was in my ass every day telling me what to do and that I needed to work harder... to do this and that. He really tried to help me make that team.

"The (Dallas) General Manager was Gil Brandt and they were trying to help me get somewhere. I bounced around a little bit. I went to Cleveland for a week and then to Denver because they lost a couple of linebackers and were thinking about carrying an extra linebacker.

"And then they lost two defensive backs and that scared them. Of course, they had Randy Gradishar and Tom Jackson there, but I had hoped to hook on there."

That quickly, the NFL dream was over for Kepley.

Defeated, Kepley accepted the fate that if he was going to play football for a living, he would have to find another league willing to let the wild dog be wild. He still had something to prove if not to everyone else, at least to himself.

"Again, I knew that if I was 6-4 240 and ran like crazy, I could make tackles with my arms and get the job done," Kepley said of the prototypical stature the NFL seeks. "But for me, I had to be very good at the basics and techniques. When I hit a person, I tried to hit with everything. My hero was Dick Butkus. You would watch how intimidating he was with the Chicago Bears and you wanted to be that way. As a smaller guy, they were going to test you all the time, and you had to show you were not going to take some s***. Someone had to know that I'm going to bring it."

It would now be a matter of finding an opportunity to show once again... any opportunity.

"I ended up coming back to North Carolina," he said. "I was getting ready to sign with the Charlotte Hornets of the WFL. So, I went to Charlotte and worked out for them on a Tuesday. They told me that they had an away game that week and to come back on Monday to get all signed up. They offered me $300 a week plus a percentage of the gate. I was thinking like most 20-year olds do, 'Let's see, $300 a week, four weeks a month, that's $1,200 a month! I can survive on that!'"

Kepley came that close to the probability of being a football side note until timing finally fell in his favor.

"Frank Morris was the top scout for the Edmonton Eskimos at that time," Kepley recalled. "He called me on a Wednesday and told me that they lost their middle linebacker and that they wanted to bring me up for a tryout. He told me that (the Eskimos) were guaranteed a playoff position and that they would pay me $3,000 a game for the four remaining games plus the playoffs.

"I was pretty good with numbers and I could figure (the economics) out. I had no clue where Edmonton was. This was in October and it was 60 degrees (in NC) and I got off the plane in Edmonton and it was blowing snow like you would not believe. I had a golf shirt on and I could tell from Frank's face that he was thinking I was some redneck. Fortunately, he had a down-filled jacket for me.

"We kept driving and driving and driving and I'm like, 'Where are you taking me?' He pointed to Clark Stadium and said, 'There it is, your new home.' Clark held maybe 15,000 people and East Carolina held over 20,000 at the time, but I didn't give a s***. It was time to play. I signed the contract on a Thursday and I started for them on a Saturday."

Oh Canada!

Kepley once again had hope in the form of an opportunity to show just what the NFL refused to see even when it was right in front of them.

"I lined up and I was flying around and doing what I do and they liked it," he said of the Eskimos management and fans. "They liked it and we went to the Grey Cup in Calgary. It was 30 degrees below zero, I'm a starting linebacker playing for a championship, and at the beginning of the game a women jumps out and streaks across the field and I thought to myself, 'This is a crazy ass place, I can play here.'"

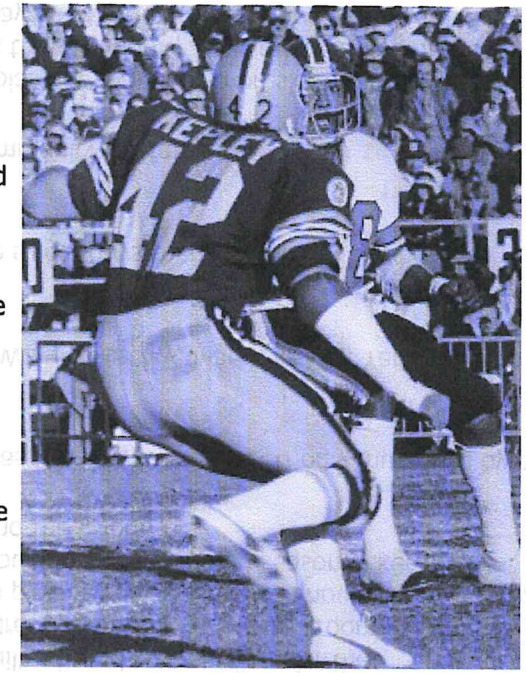
This time, no draft choice would receive preferential treatment; no incumbent would gobble up the roster spot. This time, Kepley was the man and he proved as much in training camp the next year, winning an all-out battle royal with former Missouri star backer Sam Britts – whose injury opened the door for Kepley in Edmonton. Kepley emerged entrenched as the starter and Britts packed his bags in a trade to Hamilton.

"This was football to me," Kepley said. "You grow up watching the NFL and the guys you admired and you prayed you'd have the chance to do the same thing. But, when it came to it, Edmonton was my chance to continue to play and do what I love. And, man, I love this game of football. To be in Edmonton as the starter, coming off a Grey Cup championship, for me, was like asking a nympho to be a hooker. I remember thinking, 'They are actually paying me to do what I love to do.'"

Adjusting to the rules north of the border presented some early laughs at Kepley's expense.

"Oooh, the rules," he lamented. "That was a little difficult for

me at first. When I arrived in Edmonton, the coaches spent most of the Thursday and Friday giving me a crash course in the defensive system and my role. Didn't get much on the rules. I remember one game against Calgary, I was trying to call a time out and our defensive end, Ron Este who played at LSU and was a real Cajun guy who you could never understand a word he was saying, starts yelling to me. I am walking down the line of scrimmage trying to get a time out and they pitch the ball to Willie Burden (former Raleigh Enloe and N.C. State standout running back) and I ended up making the tackle. Este had been yelling to let me know that in the CFL, there are NO time outs."



Kepley in action with the Edmonton Eskimos
(Photo courtesy of the Edmonton Eskimos)

There were other times.

"At practice, one time, I see two guys go in motion at the same time," he recalled. "So, I hit the center in the mouth and a fight ensued."

After getting a grip on the rules, what followed for Kepley still must feel like a dream life.

"When I arrived in 1975, it started," he said. "The thing that has always driven me is that you are only as good as the last game. People will do that to you. You have to do this every day. Kind of like at East Carolina. As a smaller guy trying to make an impression on a team and a league, there is no gray area. You have got to do things to an extreme. You want your teammates to say they want to go to war with you. Those same challenges continued for the 10 years that I played."

Kepley had found a home and was not going to lose it.

"Look, I negotiated all my contracts myself," he said. "It was not like the NFL money today and I thought that I could represent myself and be able to establish my position and understand their position and it worked out very, very well. At one time the general manager was Norm Kemple and I had put a clause in the contract that if I won MVP or was named All-CFL, I would get this kind of bonus. Well Norm said to me, 'Do you mean that if I don't agree to these bonuses, you're not going to play to this level?' I liked that, so I got rid of the clause."

Straight forward, committed to winning and excellence. And the fans were the same.

The Edmonton fans instantly accepted Kepley and his style of play. Though he had displaced a well-regarded linebacker, his instant impact in the lineup made the transition much easier for the Eskimos in the stands.

"The passion in the CFL is amazing. As significant as it can be in any NFL city. They are diehard," he said. "(The fans), I'm sure, wanted to know if I was a one-hit wonder. I'm sure they were thinking, 'Can he be consistent? Is he going to be that way every Sunday?'"

Obviously, history bore out that he was a big-time gamer, leading a defense that would win five-straight Grey Cups (1978-82) and garnering the league's top defensive honor, the Schenley Award, three times (1977, 1980, and 1981).

He was a five-time Western and CFL all-star (1977-1981) and was inducted into the CFL Hall of Fame in 1996. He was also added to the Edmonton Eskimo Wall of Honour in 1987.

More than that, however, he was one of the most recognizable star athletes in Edmonton, which was emerging as a city of champions – a moniker officially bestowed on Alberta city – at the time.

"The Eskimos were the only thing they had going in this city, then," he said referring to the late '70s. "Obviously, hockey was big, but in '78, when (Wayne) Gretzky came and the Oilers became part of the NHL, we were winning five Grey Cups in a row. In 1978, they had built a brand new stadium for the Commonwealth Games and one of my fondest memories was dressing in that little locker room in Clark Stadium and then walking across into a 50,000-seat stadium to play in front of a packed house every game. If we had had 60,000 seats (which it does now) in 1981, we would have had 54,000 season ticket holders. The city was nicknamed the city of champions because of us and the Oilers.

"It was an unbelievable time (to be a young, star athlete). It was like downtown at ECU only multiplied by a million times."

At 25 years old, Kepley's gang of friends included a teen-aged Wayne Gretzky, Mark Messier, Yari Kuri, and Kevin Lowe.

"We did quite a bit of hanging out," he recalled. "All of us were single guys then. We are all close friends to this day."

It was a good time, for sure, and Kepley embraced his new community full force.

"The Edmonton franchise is a community-owned team," he explained. "We have a president and a CEO, a COO, and a board of directors made up of prominent people in the community. This made it even more important for us to be part of the community. The American players came up, bought homes and stayed

year round and would be visible. I do consider Edmonton my home... I really do. I have been here basically since 1975. The mid-90s I was in Philadelphia when I was with ESPN and ESPN 2 doing college and arena games, but largely, I consider Edmonton home."

Again, Kepley is quick to point out his 10-year run was due to his teammates.

"I could not have written it any better, honestly," he said. "God is good and I was blessed. I was very fortunate to have the opportunity to be in a situation that when I came in Edmonton we had guys who were able to stay together a long time and be successful. Everything was a sixth sense and you needn't communicate because you just knew what every guy was going to do.

"Tom Townes and Dale Potter, two Canadians, played beside me for eight years. We were a linebacking trio for eight years — that is unheard of. The same held true in the defensive line and virtually the same on offense. Then this young kid named Warren Moon came out of Washington. I know Warren could still play better than some of the quarterbacks in the NFL even now. And we had this guy out of Wyoming named Tom Wilkinson, who is a Hall of Famer here."

During his tenure in Edmonton, he had opportunities to go to the NFL, but by then, he was settled in and not willing to leave.

"I had a couple of chances to go back to the NFL," he said. "Dallas and Denver. But I was very happy in Edmonton and contented that I worked so hard to get to where I was in this league. I was a big fish in a little sea and the NFL offered no guarantees."

And then, it was over

Kepley spent a lifetime in the CFL in football years. He played for 10 seasons in a sport where the average guy is lucky to see four. Still, the end came entirely too soon and without warning, at least as Kepley could see it.

"I really didn't know when it was time to hang them up," he admitted. "I was one of those guys who was a little crazy – a lot crazy. There was never a time when an injury was going to keep me from playing. Pills, needles, it didn't matter. I was going to play. Then – I think it started in 1984 – I came to camp and I was in really good shape and feeling excellent and we were running sprints and my knee started bothering me. I played the whole season getting the knee shot up twice a game until it became bone on bone and there was nothing I could shoot into.

"I had lost a step, maybe two. My mind was working well, but I couldn't get from A to B like I used to. It made no sense (for Edmonton doctors) to pass me (physically) the next year from a business point of view.

It was time for the old dog to hang them up. It was the hardest decision I have ever had to make in my life. For me, it was that football had been my entire life. Playing and being one of the boys, setting the standard and the bar."

Depressed and possibly in shock, Kepley immediately accepted a coaching position under his coach, Jackie Parker (a Tennessee Volunteer legend).

"Jackie hired me as a linebacker coach," Kepley said. "He was really trying to help me out... to take care of me. He didn't want to cut me loose. But, when I walked into that Eskimo lockerroom where the players go straight and the coaches turn left... I couldn't make that left turn. I had no concept of it. Every fiber only told me how to be a player. I struggled terribly. (To be there and not play) was like rubbing your nose in it. I didn't know how to be on the sideline. I left at the end of the season... mutually. I apologized to Coach Parker because they didn't get my best. I didn't know what to do. It was like reopening a wound every day. I didn't feel old, I was just 32."

If there were darker days for Kepley, it was the time just after he left the game.

"I didn't know what to do. Losing football – next to losing my grandfather – was the worst death I have ever experienced," he said. "I was absolutely lost. I floundered around for almost a year and eventually got into real estate and worked for ReMax in 1987, and then in 1989, I got into color commentating in Edmonton on the radio. When I started my commentating, I loved it."

Kepley went from radio to television in 1991. At the time, the top CBC color commentator, Ron Lancaster, had left the booth for the sideline to coach the Eskimos, creating a vacancy at the largest Canadian broadcasting company.

"I auditioned and replaced Ron Lancaster," he said. "That work led into branching out into the United States. I eventually was doing CBC and ESPN work at the same time. It was a form of Heaven for me. If I couldn't play it anymore, at least I was talking about it and being paid money to talk about it."

Kepley also liked having something to conquer.

"Broadcasting was a challenge, a whole different learning curve," he said. "My name was still well known and players knew me. I had a good rapport with players, management, and coaches. But, it came back on my shoulders to get the information out to the viewing audience.

"To tell you how hard it was not to be biased in coverage, I had to concentrate to not say 'We' or 'Us.' It was even to the point I was over critical and sensitive to Edmonton as not to look like a homer. (Commentating) is hard."

His success in the booth only added to his celebrity in Edmonton, where to this day he still participates in celebrity events.

"Celebrity is one of those things," he said. "The good is over-exaggerated and so is the bad. You get used to it. I don't have the pleasure of enjoying the Wayne Gretzky celebrity. But, we did have a run of five Grey Cups in a row. As players, we had heard the history of the 1954-56 Eskimos who three in a row and we were driven by this history to do better and are recognized for this still."

His broadcasting work carried him to Philadelphia for a while, but it was when his son, Michael, began high school, that Kepley decided he needed to return to Edmonton to be the father he could not be when he was a player.

Still in Edmonton, Still an Eskimo

Kepley gave up the commentating work and left Philadelphia to return to Edmonton.

"My son was a football player in high school," he said. "He was a very good running back with good speed... which he obviously got from his mother. When I lived in Philly, I would get to see him quite a bit. I flew him back and forth and one day, he called me and said, 'Dad, I want to play football and I would like to have you here.' I left Philly and ESPN to come home and be with my son."

It wasn't long after he returned to Edmonton that Kepley decided to take another stab at coaching. And this time, he was emotionally ready for the role.

"When I came back to Edmonton, I got involved with the University of Alberta as a part-time coach," he explained. "Then the Eskimos invited me to their training camp as a guest coach. Then Coach Higgins asked me to consider staying on as an assistant coach full time, so I did."

He could now take that left turn and his fiery style fits well with the players, who he now must reluctantly refer to as "kids."

"To be able be in that locker room where I grew up and played a Grey Cup game and now stand on the sidelines, tears were rolling down my face when the national anthem was played. (The first game) was one of the most ultimate feelings. I thought, 'Everything is good. This is where I should be.'

Of course, he also has learned the business from the management perspective.

"Once you start to learn the coaching business is that the chord must be cut sometimes," he said in reference to the ultimate possibility that he may depart Edmonton. "If things work out, if better opportunities

emerge somewhere else, then of course I will have to consider it. My next step up the ladder is to be good enough to be a defensive coordinator. I'm not ready to become a coordinator yet, but I hope for a long future in coaching."

He is in great physical condition still and is a young 50.

"When I turned 50, these young guys presented me a rocking chair," he said. "I look at these kids and I realize I have Nike shoes in a box older than they are. Honestly, one of the greatest minds – going back to my rookie days with the Cowboys – was Lee Roy Jordan. He came up to me and he was 36 years old then and he said 'I been watching you and you are pretty quick. I know you are a lot faster than me.' I remember when he said this, I swelled up my chest and then he took his finger and he pushed it three inches into my chest to my heart and he said, 'I have 16 years up in here and you got jack all.'

"Well, after my 10th year up here, I called Lee Roy just to tell him, 'I know what you mean, I finally got it. My legs can't get me there, but my mind does.'"

As a coach, Kepley admits that he has a very soft spot for the "small" guy, the overachiever, but now sees the athletes as a coach.

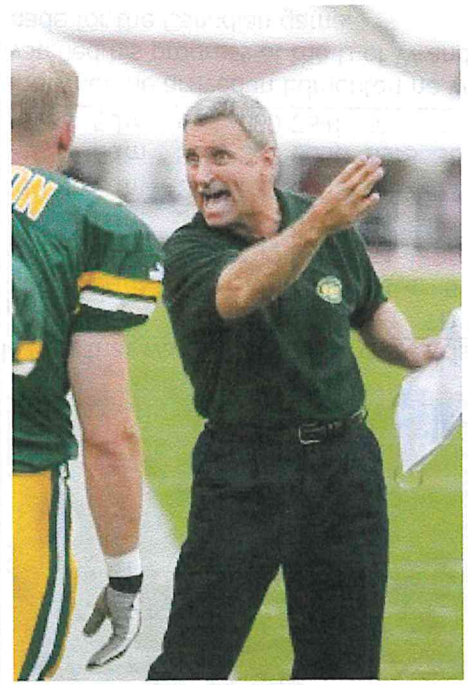
"I do gravitate to some of the guys who are like that," he said. "But I also try to get those gifted guys to maximize. And these kids do get the (meaning of Edmonton) history. They keep me young and I won't let them see me as an old man. I'll challenge their ass every day."

His players respect him and, oftentimes, his passion makes him appear to be the head coach on the sidelines. And, he is a player's coach all the way; as you listen to the respect he has for his players.

"We have a rush end from Clemson, Rahim Abdullah, who is simply so gifted, and a receiver from Carolina, Korey Bailey, who is a fine, fine receiver, even if I always have to hear it from him about us losing to UNC. I've even tried to bring (Marcus) Crandell – he's a good one – over to us."

He is jacked up in preparation for the upcoming February draft and the excitement of heading into the season as the defending CFL champions. The dark days seem so far away.

"Absolutely, I see myself coaching for years," he said.



Kepley is now a coach in the CFL for the Edmonton Eskimos (Photo by Dale MacMillan)

"Then, all I knew how to be was a player. I wasn't strong enough then. That pain was too much to handle. Now, to work the hours and make a plan comes together, there is nothing like it. It is time to go to work. Next year, everything is turned up a couple of notches."

He harkens back to his old coaches. Randle, Dye, Henry Trevathan, guys he says dedicated themselves to ECU – some for a short while, others for life – and he wants to be that kind of a coach. East Carolina will always be in his thoughts and, according to Kepley, you just never know...

"Are you kidding? I would love to go back to ECU and coach linebackers there," he said. "I like that idea a whole lot. Coaching these young players is amazing. They really are so much like sponges and take in what you can give them. You tell them to get the work done and they go do it. It would be a win-win situation for me. Sometimes, it is like that in the pros, but it is very hard sometimes in reality to talk to our starting rush end, who is an all pro, and tell him how to play. You can only share insight. They know how to get the job. But in college, they are the sponges."

We can all hope one day the Pirates give him a call. But if it doesn't happen, don't think for a minute that Kepley won't be loving his life.

"The Edmonton Eskimos have been my life for 25 years," he said. "Green and Gold. So many great athletes, similar to ECU with a great sense of camaraderie. In a fight, we are all together fighting out of the alley or all found dead in the alley."

Edmonton Eskimos

East:
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Ottawa
Montreal

West:
Winnipeg
Saskatchewan
Calgary
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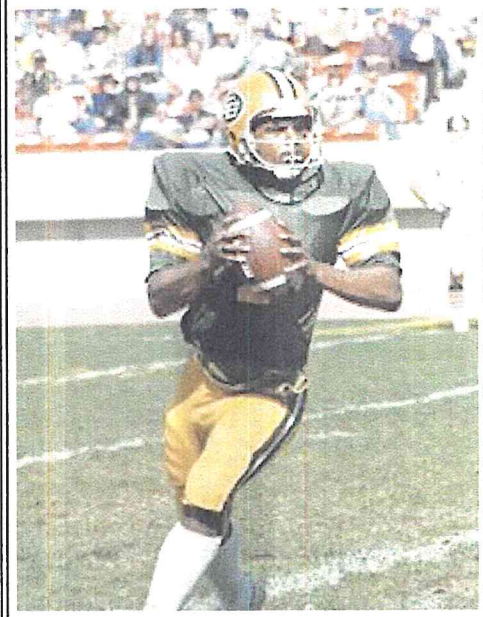
Edmonton

CFL Home

Warren Moon - Quarterback - 1978-83 - University of Washington



By Edmonton Eskimo Alumni - http://www.edmontoneskimoalumni.com/news_moon.htm
Almost twenty years since he left the Edmonton Eskimos to break new ground in the National Football League, Warren Moon returned to Edmonton in to be inducted on the Eskimos Wall of Honour on August 24. His return sparked a rush of memories to the five-in-a-row dynasty teams of 1978-1982 and brought together many of the players from that era for the first time since their record-breaking performance.

Warren Moon gained entry into an exclusive club that increased its membership to 21 that night as he followed in the footwsteps of legendary players like Normie Kwong, Johnny Bright and Brian Kelly. Interestingly enough, the first member of the storied group was his friend and mentor Tom Wilkinson who was honoured in 1982, one-year after his retirement.

After a sparkling career at the University of Washington where he led the Huskies to a Rose Bowl victory in 1978, Moon was shunned by a league that was still in the grips of racism and unwilling to give an African-American a shot at playing quarterback. When NFL scouts came calling, they offered up the opportunity to utilize his vast talents as a defensive back but Moon simply walked away and came North in search of an opportunity to play.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1978	Edm	173	89	1112	51.4	5	7
1979	Edm	274	149	2382	54.4	20	12
1980	Edm	331	181	3127	54.7	25	11
1981	Edm	378	237	3959	62.7	27	12
1982	Edm	562	333	5000	59.3	36	16
1983	Edm	664	380	5648	57.2	31	19

He signed his first professional contract with the Eskimos in the spring of 1978 after he was overlooked in the NFL Entry Draft and when he arrived in Edmonton he was welcomed with open arms. The Eskimos scouting staff had watched his progress at the U of W and knew his strong arm, quick release and scrambling ability was ready-made for the Canadian game.

In his first pro season Moon apprenticed under Tom Wilkinson, a master of the short passing game and a patient teacher. He would see limited action but did complete 89 passes in 173 attempts for 1,112 yards and showed an ability to read the opposing defense despite the recent transition from the run-dominated American game.

After defeating Calgary in the Western Final by a score of 26-13, the Eskimos faced the Montreal Alouettes and got revenge for their humiliating loss a year previous in the now infamous "staples game." This time the Esks came away with a hard-fought 20-13 win and Moon would have his first Grey Cup ring.

The following year, 1979, Moon would begin to accept the mantel from Tom Wilkinson as the two shared quarterbacking duties but Moon ended the season throwing and completing more passes than his mentor as the Eskimos made their third straight journey to the Grey Cup and fourth in five years. Again, the Eskimos would come away with a win over the Alouettes, this time 17-9 on a bitterly cold day with Moon throwing the only touchdown strike of the game to slotback Tom Scott.

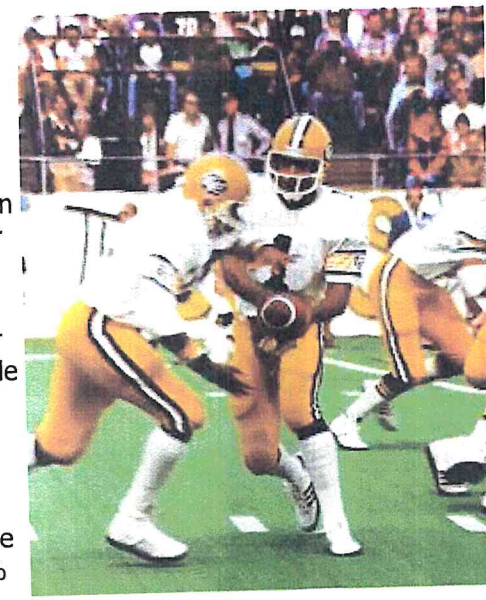
By 1980, Moon was the established number one quarterback although Wilkinson continued to see playing time. He finished the year with 181 completions on 331 attempts and 25 touchdowns leading the Esks to the Grey Cup against the vastly outmatched Hamilton Tiger Cats. Led by Moon's passing and running, the Eskimos ran up the score on their way to a 48-10 victory, tying the record of the 1954-1956 Eskimos as the only team to win three consecutive titles. Moon was named the Player of the Game, further adding to his reputation as a winner.

In 1981, the Eskimos had something to prove despite winning three straight championships. While many teams have problem staying motivated after a prolonged winning streak, the Eskimos were determined to set a new standard by winning a fourth consecutive Grey Cup and they made it look easy, at least during the regular season. The powerhouse Esks finished the regular season with a 14-1-1 record and defeated B.C. in the final before meeting the woeful 5-11 Ottawa Rough Ridersin the Grey Cup game.

If ever the CFL was going to serve up a David and Goliath match-up, this was it. Many experts predicted the Eskimos would win by as much as 40-points and nobody gave the Riders a chance. Unfortunately for the Eskimos, someone forgot to tell J.C. Watts and his teammates and the Eskimos found themselves down by a 20-0 score late in the first half. In an effort to calm Moon down and give him the opportunity to see the game from a different perspective, Campbell inserted the veteran Wilkinson into the lineup and suddenly the Eskimos were able to move the ball with the short passing game Wilkinson was renowned for. Methodically, Wilkie moved the ball down into field goal range with time running down but Dave Cutler missed the uprights sending the Esks to the locker room down 20-1.

Surprised, but not shocked the Eskimos spent the half time talking about the effort it would take to come back and as he remembered it, there wasn't a man in the locker room who didn't think they could do it.

"We knew we were a veteran team that had the ability to come back so we weren't concerned," Moon said. Every man in that dressing knew we had the ability to come back if we simply went out and executed the game plan, which we did."



After the half, Moon was back at the controls and in their first possession they scored to put themselves back in the game. The Eskimos closed to within eight with just over four minutes to go when Moon hit Tom Scott with a 34-yard strike to pull the Esks to within two. With momentum on his side, Campbell left the offense stay in to attempt a two-point convert and the gamble paid off when Moon scrambled out of the pocket and fired a pass to Marco Cyncar deep in the end zone to tie the game.

On their last possession, Moon moved the ball again giving Cutler a chance to win the game with six seconds on the clock. Mr. Reliable split the uprights fulfilling the team's goal to become the first four-time winners of the Grey Cup.

The following year, Moon was without the guidance of Tom Wilkinson who retired after the '81 campaign, but the script was the same with Moon at the helm. He finished the season with a 59.3 % completion rate and threw for 36 touchdowns leading the Eskimos to an 11-5 record and another berth in the Western Final. The Eskimos fought off a determined Winnipeg squad 24-21 to advance to the Grey Cup against Toronto, but this time the experts believed the Eskimos would have their hands full. Led by Condredge Holloway, the Argonauts kept the game close until the fourth quarter when the Esks would pull away and the 32-16 victory would be the last Grey Cup experience for Moon. He finished the game 21 of 33 for 319 yards and added 91 yards rushing.

In 1983 the Eskimos dynasty finally came to a close and Warren Moon said farewell to Edmonton. In his time with the Eskimos the team had a record of 78-23-5 in the regular season and an even more impressive 10-1 mark in the playoffs.

But Moon's accomplishments on the gridiron had only begun. He would go on to become one of the most prolific passers in the history of the NFL and when he retired at the end of the 2000 season, he had amassed 62,501 career yards in the two leagues, a pro football record.

Looking up at the Wall of Honour makes me realize how lucky I've been to be an Edmonton Eskimo fan over the years. From my first hero, John Lagrone, to more recent players like Dan Kepley and Tom Wilkinson, I have a lifetime of memories but few rival the still fresh vision of the silky smooth throw and perfect spiral of Warren Moon.

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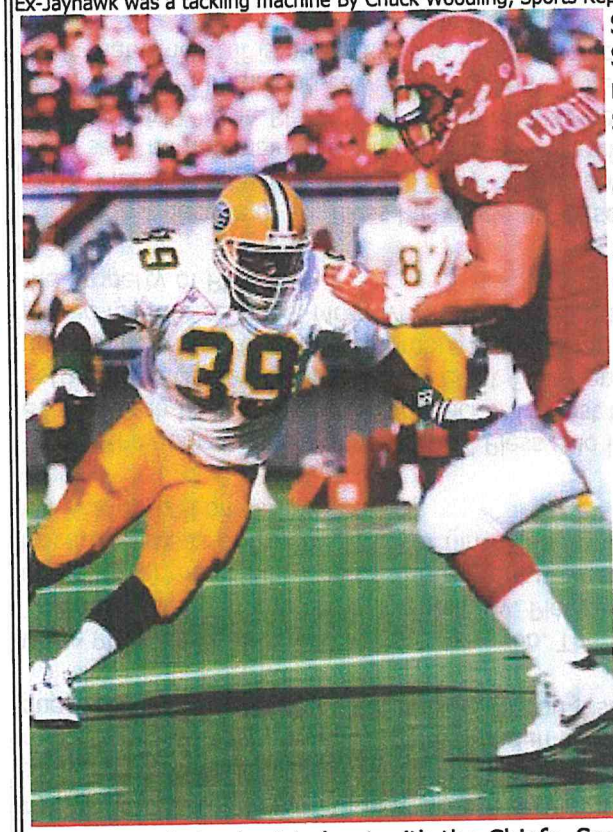
Willie Pless - Linebacker - 1991-98 - Kansas

Ex-Jayhawk was a tackling machine By Chuck Woodling, Sports Reporter Friday, June 23, 2000



Some men are born to dance. Others are born to sing. Some can shoot the three-point shot. Others can perform magic with a golf club.

Some guys can play football. Some can't. I've seen big men who couldn't play a lick. And I've seen little guys with extraordinary ability. Willie Pless was to me the Barry Sanders of defense. Both Sanders and Pless are about the same size. Whereas Sanders possessed the knack of making tacklers miss him, Pless had the uncanny ability to make tackles.

Too bad Sanders and Pless never had the opportunity to perform in the same NFL venues. The NFL will find a home for a small running back, but it has no use for a 5-foot-10, 210-pound linebacker.

Willie Pless, who retired from the Canadian Football League this week at the age of 36, was simply the best defensive player in CFL history. Yet there was a time when he yearned to play in the NFL.

Ignored in the 1986 NFL draft, Pless went to Canada and played three years for the Toronto Argonauts before deciding he would try to make an NFL team as a free agent. Pless picked New Orleans, but suffered a lower back injury in a preseason Saints' game and was placed on waivers. Later he tried out with the Chiefs. Sorry, Willie.

So Pless returned to Canada where he tackled his way into history.

Along the way, Pless was revered by the local populace for his involvement in community affairs, and respected by his contemporaries for his humility. Willie Pless never met a microphone he liked, never looked

into a television camera he loved and continually urged pen-and-pencil pushing media-types to talk to his teammates instead. When Pless was a freshman at Kansas University in 1982, he rarely talked to the media because mostly he played only on the punt and kickoff coverage teams. Then, under first-year KU coach Mike Gottfried, Pless became a starting linebacker in 1983.

As his talent became more and more obvious with every game, Pless became a media target. He would have preferred an appendectomy with a church key. All during the 1983 season, for example, Pless refused all requests from television reporters to stand in front of a camera. Eventually, though, he relented, saying: "I guess there's no way of getting around it. You just have to come out of a shell and do it."

Willie Pless broke the mold in his family, too. The youngest of five boys, he was the first to go to college. The other four had enlisted in the military. Pless would have loved to stay close to his Anniston, Ala., home and play for either Alabama or Auburn, but neither school was interested. Too small, you know.
How did Kansas University discover him? The Anniston High team doctor, a Kansas grad, sent films of him to the KU football office.

"When they offered me a scholarship," Pless said later, "I was thrilled to death."
Even though he was a starting linebacker for just three seasons, Pless established career tackling records for both Kansas University and the Big Eight Conference. Pless was credited with 633 tackles. To put that number in perspective, it is 230 more tackles than the runner-up, Rick Bredesen, another linebacker who played for four seasons. Moreover, the three highest single-season tackling performances by a Jayhawk are the property of Pless.

For the last decade or so, Pless has made his offseason home in Edmonton. In his last visit to Lawrence in 1997, Pless talked with KU coach Terry Allen about the possibility of joining his staff some day.
Allen says he has maintained a correspondence with Pless, and who knows?
During that '97 visit, Pless didn't hedge about what he wanted to do after he retired from pro football.
"I'm interested in making Lawrence my home," he said. "My heart's always been there."
And what a heart it is. Willie Pless is 210 pounds of heart

Willie Pless played 250 regular-season games with four different teams - primarily the Edmonton Eskimos - and made 11 CFL All-star teams before retiring in 1999 as the League's all-time leading tackler.
A 5-foot-11, 210-pound middle linebacker from the University of Kansas, Pless made 1,241 defensive tackles during his 14-year CFL career. Five times he led the League and seven times he had more than 100 defensive tackles. He also had 84 quarterback sacks, 39 interceptions, 39 fumble recoveries, played in 18 playoff games and three Grey Cups.

Pless joined the Toronto Argonauts in 1986. After four years with Toronto, including a Grey Cup appearance in 1987 and another All-Star campaign in 1988, he was one of six Argonauts traded to the B.C. Lions for quarterback Matt Dunigan. Pless spent only one season in B.C., earning his third nod as a division and CFL

All-Star plus a nomination as the Lions' outstanding player, before signing with Edmonton as a free agent. During eight seasons (1991-1999) in Edmonton he ranged all over the field, setting Eskimos records with 813 all-time defensive tackles, 117 tackles in one season (1998) and four times tied the team mark of 12 defensive tackles in one game. Pless won numerous awards and honours throughout his tenure as an Eskimo.

As a free agent he joined the Saskatchewan Roughriders in 1999, recording a 102-tackle campaign and being named their outstanding defensive player and a division All-Star during his final season. He rejoined the Eskimos for a symbolic game in the 2000 preseason. Pless, who was born Feb. 21, 1964, in Anniston, Alabama, was enshrined last year in the Edmonton Eskimo Wall of Honour.

HONOURS AND AWARDS:

- CFL outstanding defensive player: 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997
- West Division outstanding defensive player: 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997
- East Division outstanding rookie: 1986
- CFL All-Star: 1986, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998.
- East Division All-Star: 1986, 1988
- West Division All-Star: 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999
- North Division All-star: 1995
- B.C. Lions outstanding player: 1990
- Edmonton Eskimos outstanding player: 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996
- Toronto Argonauts outstanding defensive player: 1986, 1988
- B.C. Lions outstanding defensive player: 1990
- Edmonton Eskimos outstanding defensive player:1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997
- Saskatchewan Roughriders outstanding defensive player: 1999
- Toronto Argonauts outstanding rookie: 1986
- Grey Cup participation: 1987, 1993, 1996
- Grey Cup victories: 1993

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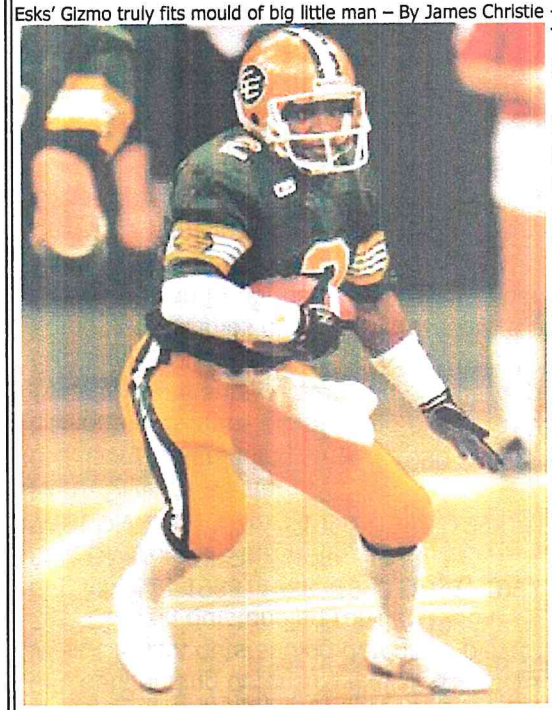
Henry "Gizmo" Williams - Returner - 1986-2000 - East Carolina

Esks' Gizmo truly fits mould of big little man – By James Christie - Globe&Mail - November 1996



There us an inevitable connection in professional sports between the small man and the big heart.

When the Edmonton Eskimos come up against the Toronto Argonauts at Ivor Wynne Stadium for the Grey Cup on Sunday, people will expect pinpoint accuracy from Toronto quarterback Doug Flutie. They will expect defensive pressure from Edmonton's standout linebacker Willie Pless, and defensive end, Leroy Blugh,

But what they will expect from kick returners Henry (Gizmo) Williams of Edmonton and Michael (Pinball) Clemons of Toronto is the competitive fire that takes the chill out of late November air – entertainment and excitement that takes the sting out of $150 top ticket price. These are the men who must run through the eye of a needle to break the game open, to thrill and enchant, to make football fans forget, for a day, they are watchin a league close to the end of the line.

Williams and Clemons, each about as big and as solid as a fire hydrant are adored in their respective cities.

In the days where the "C" of CFL could be interpreted as Carpetbaggers instead of Canadian, because of the transience of players, owners, and entire franchises, these pocket dynamos have been symbols of solidity.

This is Williams 10th season in the Canadian Football League, his 12th as a pro, counting a start with the Memphis Showboats of the old U.S.Football League in 1985 and a 1988 cup of coffee with the Philadelphia Eagles of the National Football League. All his CFL seasons have been with the Esks. He's the franchise anchor in that town, the kind of marketer and good-will ambassador a club couldn't hope to hire for a six-figure salary. He speaks at more than 300 schools a year, telling kids the importance of finishing their education and staying off drugs. He's considered the most popular Edmonton Eskimo since the great Jackie Parker.

And the Grey Cup may be Williams' last game. He's in denial about that. The 33-year-old Memphis native figures he still has another season left.

But more important is that he's hoping he's got another year or two of good health. Williams is from a family whose members have been stricken with multiple sclerosis. Of his 10 siblings, most have died of the disorder of the central nervous system. He says one sister dies of a drug overdose, and one brother of a gunshot wound to the head. Only Williams and one sister remain, 'and my sister has been through the stages of losing her balance, confinement to a wheelchair , loss of her voice and now she's on bed rest. I don't know how much longer she's got. I don't think any of my brothers or sisters lived past 35."

He fights that melancholy as he had fought off tacklers since becoming a pro football player out of the University of East Carolina. Williams is known as the soul of the Eskimos team. At a recent practice in Edmonton he was seen running up the snowy steps of the stadium. Like Rocky Balboa, fists upthrust to the sky in triumph.

But there are other times when the sentiment overwhelms him. "I was so poor growing up... all I ever wanted when I became successful was to have a big house, big enough for everyone in my family to have a room. But sometimes I walk through the house and I cry. I wish I had my parents and family to enjoy it."

Williams said his mother dies of MS when he was only 6, at Christmas. One year later, also at Christmas his father perished in a house fire.

"Seven of us were raised by my brother, Edgar, who was 22 at the time." Williams said yesterday at a news-media gathering in Hamilton.

Williams was in grade 7 when Edgar fell ill, too.

"The welfare people came over and saw how many children were living in the house and wanted to put the seven of us in an orphan home. That's when my aunt stepped up and took us in to keep us together.

Ask him who his heroes are and Williams immediately mentions his family, no football players.

"With all that, it's hard to feel down about football. The way I look at it, I had the opportunity so many people never had, to play a professional sport and travel around."

Williams missed the first part of this season with a hamstring injury and didn't play until after Labour Day. Part of the reason was that he needed time to recuperate, but much of it was that it was getting difficult to justify a spot on the roster for a player whose specialty is running back kicks and doesn't have a regular backfield assignment. He's had perhaps one pass tossed to him all season, and has run the occasional reverse.

But his acceleration on a kick return is his bread and butter.

"I'm not like Michael (Clemons). I don't have a second decision." He said. Referring to his straight-ahead speed, rather than shifty moves."

"the first decision I make, that's it."

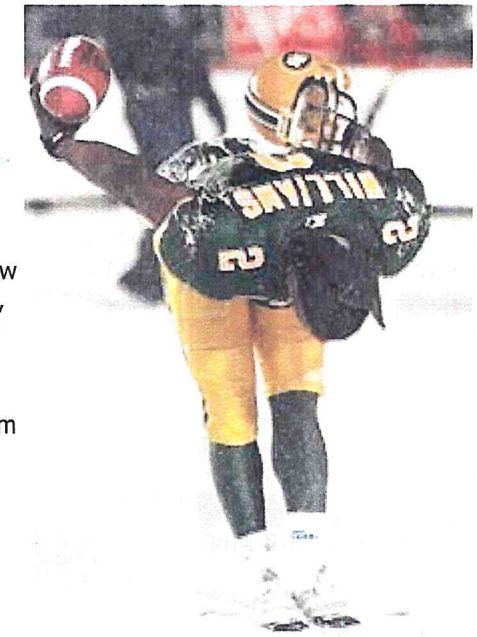
The speed has served him well. He's in the Grey Cup record book for having scored a 115-yard touchdown on the return of a missed field goal Nov.29, 1987, against the Toronto Argonauts.

He figures part of his legacy to football is that he's validated the small, quick player's spot in the game.

"A lot of kids look at their size and people say they can't make it. But I tell them "You come to the CFL and you'll get that opportunity if you're good enough.'

"There's been me, Pinball, Peewee, Earl Winfield... everytime a new little guy comes into the league, people say "Giz, you've got to compete against him, now' But really I compete against myself. This isn't a 100- or 200- metre dash. It's a team sport."

He has a love and loyalty to the league and the game that gave him the chance. After his brief tenure with Philadelphia in the NFL, he said, he had nibbles from the New York Giants, Washington Redskins and Dallas Cowboys.



But he said there was too much politics and too much risk of not being an everyday player with the NFL option.

"I'd already made a steppingstone here. Canada was the place where I knew I'd be able to play. Besides, in Canada there's more (governmental) politics, but there's more killing in the States. When I retire, and I think 1997 would be my last year, this is where I'd want to be."

He will always be known by his unique nickname, which is said to come from the devilish expression he wears, reminiscent of the the gace of Gizmo the lead Gremlin in the movie of that name.

"Nobody even knows my name is Henry. If I sign an autograph 'Henry', no one know who that is. I don't even answer to Henry anymore. I sign my cheques Gizmo.

"Helluva name, ain't it? But it's better than what they used to call me 'Smurf.'"

What the man really should be called is courageous.

Hamilton Tiger Cats

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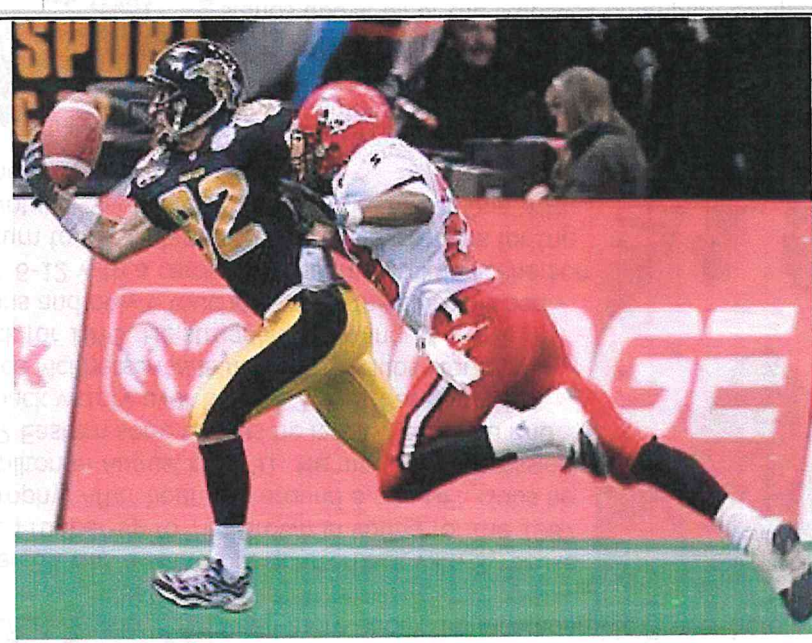
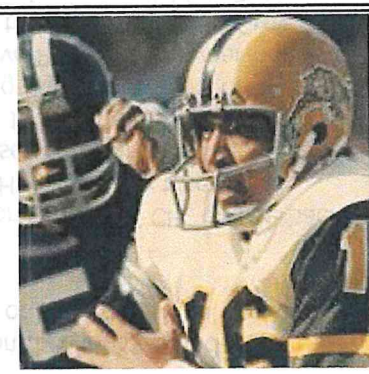


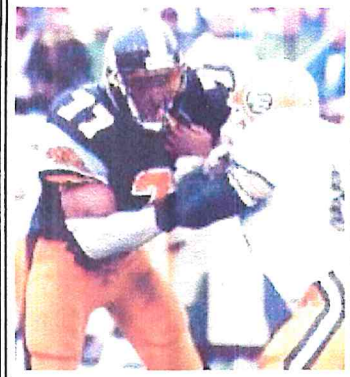
Darren Flutie's one-handed touchdown catch was the highlight of Hamilton's 32-21 Grey Cup victory over the Calgary Stampeders at B.C.Place in 1999. read more about Darren's illustrious CFL career here...

The Hamilton Tiger Cats signed Chuck Ealey prior to the 1972 season. Ealey was coming off an NCAA record 35 game winning streak with the Toledo Rockets that still stands. Ealey had offers from the NFL to play as a running back but elected to sign with Hamilton and continue his career at quarterback. He was an instant success with Hamilton winning the Schenley for Outstanding Rookie in 1972 and named MVP of the '72 Grey Cup in which Hamilton defeated Saskatchewan 13-10 on a last second field goal at newly renovated Ivor Wynne Stadium. Ealey



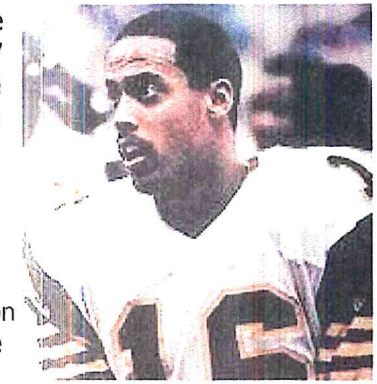
Looking to make a splash in the football world following a disappointing 1993 season Hamilton looked to add a marquee quarterback. The Tiger Cats lured Timm Rosenbach the former Arizona Cardinal and Washington State standout out of retirement and back onto the gridiron. Rosenbach barely made labour day and after just 10 games was out of the league with the team struggling to a 2-8 record. It was a short stay for

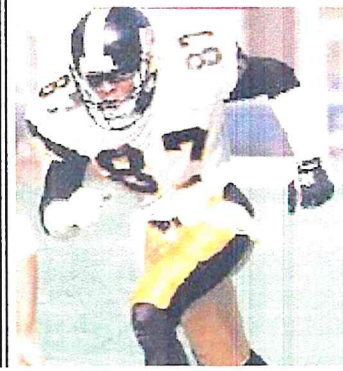
lasted just over two seasons with Hamilton before moving on to Winnipeg and then Toronto but his magical rookie season lasts as the highlight of his professional career. Read more about Chuck here...



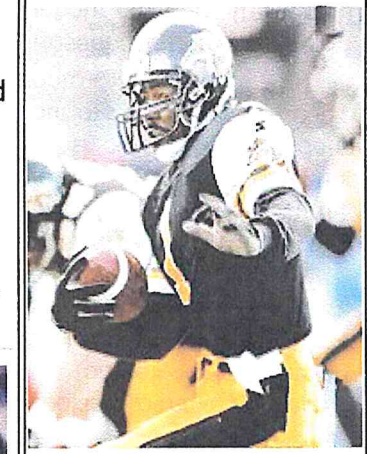
Defensive End Grover Covington terrorized CFL quarterbacks in the 1980's. Grover came to Hamilton in a trade with Montreal prior to the 1981 season after graduating from Johnson C. Smith University in 1980. The 6'3" 255 pound end was a force on defence, leading the CFL in sacks on 3 occasions and winning Defensive Player of the year honours in 1988. He totalled 3 sacks in the Tiger Cas 1986 Grey Cup victory over Edmonton 39-16 and was named top Defensive Player of the title game that year. He retired after the 1991 season compiling a CFL record 157 career quarterback sacks. Read more about the incomparable Grover here...

Don McPherson was a stand-out quarterback with Syracuse and finished runner-up to Tim Brown in voting for the 1987 Heisman trophy. After bouncing around a few NFL clubs he joined Hamilton in August of 1991. He made an impression in the 1992 Eastern semi-final as he led the club to a 2nd half comeback victory over Ottawa 29-28. Based on that performance McPherson was named the clubs starting quarterback for 1993. He struggled throwing 21 interceptions and only 6 touchdowns as the club finished the year at 6-12 with a carousel of quarterbacks. McPherson did not return to the club and the lofty expectations for the athletic pivot were not fulfilled. Read more about Don with Hamilton here...



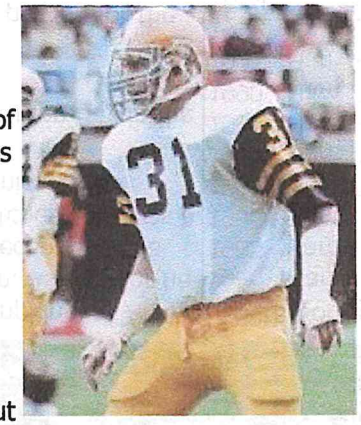


Tony Champion holds a special place in the hearts of all Tiger Cat fans. The lanky graduate of the University of Tennessee-Martin had an outstanding 7 year career with Hamilton. What stands above all of the statistics Champion compiled is what many consider the greatest catch in football. In the 1989 Grey Cup, Hamilton battled the Saskatchewan Roughriders in the newly minted Skydome. Suffering from broken ribs; Champion made a spectacular, twisting, catch falling backward into the end zone, the play stands as a signature play in Grey Cup and CFL history. Champion had 14 touchdown receptions that season and although Hamilton Rosenbach but a notable name to add to a long list of Tiger Cat pivots. Read more about Timm here...



One of the most popular and beloved players in Tiger Cat history is receiver Earl Winfield. Earl joined Hamilton in 1987 and was the teams most outstanding player 5 times and a division all-star on 4 occasions. He enjoyed his best season in 1995 with 1,496 yard receiving and 13 touchdowns. He retired after the 1996 season but returned for a brief stint in late '97 before retiring for good as the team leader in career receiving yards and touchdowns. read more about Earl here...

would lose the Grey Cup that day, Champion and that catch will not soon be forgotten. Read more about Tony and his career with Hamilton here...



Ben Zambiasi was a ferocious linebacker for the Hamilton Tiger Cats for 10 seasons. He joined the club after a brief stint with the Chicago Bears in 1978 and was an instant success. The Georgia grad was runner up for league rookie of the year honours in '78 after just 10 games. He continued his dominance at linebacker into the 1980's as he was named a league all-star every season from 1978-82. Although only 6'1" and 215 lbs Zambiasi was a feared defender known for his punishing hits. The team won the Grey Cup in 1986 behind the clubs dominant defence led by Ben Zambiasi. He left the club in March 1988 and spent his final season in the league with Toronto in 1989. A true legend in the long history of dominant Ticat defensive players. Read more about Ben here...

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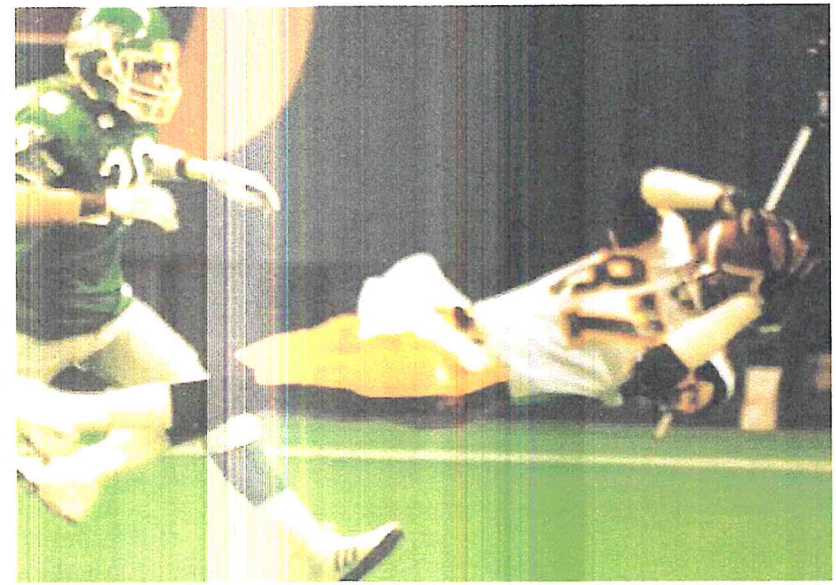
Tony Champion - Wide Receiver - 1985-92 - Tennessee Martin



A multi-sport star, Champion lived up to his name as a football standout at the high school, college and pro level. A 1981 Humboldt grad, he was an all-district player on the Vikings' 1979 undefeated, 13-0 Class AA state champion football team. As a senior he quarterbacked Humboldt to a 10-1 season and was selected All-West Tenn., 2nd Team All-State and Humboldt Player of the Year. In basketball Champion earned All-District and All-Region as Humboldt finished state runner-up. In track he placed 4th in state in the 330 yd. low hurdles as a junior and qualified for the state as a senior, but elected to attend graduation instead of competing at the state meet.

Playing football at the Univ. of Tenn. Martin (1981-84), Champion was All-Gulf South Conference, had 84 career points and tied a school record with a 100-yard kickoff return. As a junior he surpassed 1,000 receiving yards and set school records for receptions in a season (39) and most yards single game (181 yards on 3 catches). He was a pre-season All-American before suffering knee injury as a senior.

Year	Team	No	Yds	Avg.	Lg	TD
1985	Ham	13	203	15.6	67	1
1986	Ham	74	1216	16.4	75	6
1987	Ham	53	851	16.1	75	6
1988	Ham	16	270	16.9	42	1
1989	Ham	95	1656	17.4	83	15
1990	Ham	37	581	15.7	75	5
1991	Ham	45	545	12.1	26	2
1992	Ham	7	176	25.1	75	1
Total		340	5498	16.2	83	37

Champion signed as free agent with Dallas, San Diego, and Green Bay in the NFL, but narrowly missed roster cuts.

He achieved all-star status in the Canadian Football League, playing for the Hamilton Tiger Cats eight seasons, 1985-1992. For his career he had 340 receptions for 5,498 yards and 37 TD's. In 1989 Champion was runner-up as the CFL Player of the Year,

Hamilton's Most Valuable Player, winner of the Frank Gibson and Terry Evanshen trophies, and set a team season record for touchdowns with 15 on the year. Champion's circus touchdown catch in the Grey Cup league championship game was called "the greatest catch in football."

Champion is the son of the late Sadie Mai Champion of Humboldt. Tony and wife, Darla have two children, Kiara and Maiya and reside in Humboldt.

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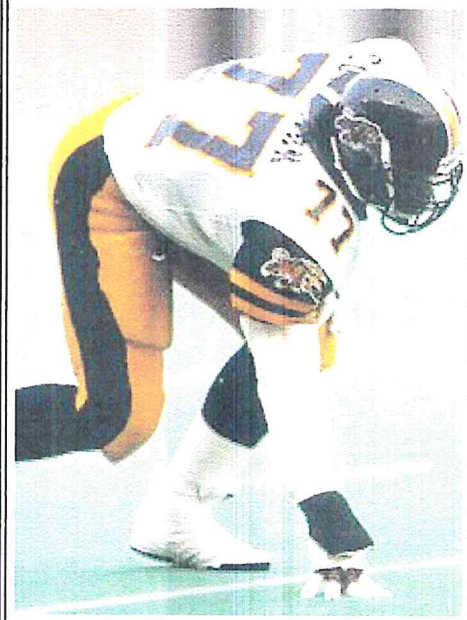
Grover Covington -Hamilton Tiger Cats- Defensive End -1981-91

-posted by Adam - Hamilton Tiger Cats - Chat - Official Tiger Cats Website - October 22, 2004



Grover Covington, a native of Monroe, North Carolina, attended Johnson C. Smith University, then, was a free agent signing by the Alouettes in May of 1981. In a pre-season trade, he went to Hamilton later that year.

"I knew about the tradition of defence and the term, steel-tough, so it was a lot different than Montreal," he recalled. "I fell in love with the city. The people welcomed me with open arms, accepted me like one of their sons. I have so many friends in Hamilton and that will never change."

In the mid 1980's their names sounded like a law firm: Covington, Walker, Skillman, Price. The Hamilton front four was ferocious, and was one big reason why the Tiger-Cats went to the Grey Cup three consecutive years. After a loss to Winnipeg in 1984, and BC in 1985, Covington echoed what all of his teammates have said: the third time, they weren't going to be denied.

"In 1984, it seemed we were happy just to get to the Grey Cup," the gentle giant said. "In 1985, we were upset because we wanted the ring and you never knew when you'd be going back. In 1986, that team was so focused, it was like we were in another world, and that showed in the play of our defence, especially. We totally dominated Edmonton and I will never forget that game, or my teammates. I love them to death just because that was the first time I ever won a championship at any level."

Covington still holds the CFL record for most career regular season sacks, 157. Those numbers were so impressive, that he was elected into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame on February 22, 2000. On October 15 of this year, his name was added to the Wall of Honour at Ivor Wynne Stadium.

"Not in my wildest dreams did I ever think this would happen" Covington admitted.

"When I first came to the CFL, I just wanted to make the team. From not playing football till Grade 11, to the Hall of Fame, and now, seeing my name on the Wall of Honour, I'm overwhelmed."

Football is perhaps the ultimate team game, and that's something the eleven-year Tiger-Cat wanted to emphasize.

"You don't get to this point by yourself. It's other people that helped you, from high school coaches to my position coach for most of my stay in Hamilton, Ted Schmitz. They all instilled the values of working hard."

These days, Covington and his family live in Vancouver, where he keeps busy, working and coaching football. But, there's one more part to his post-season career that he would like to pursue.

Year	Team	Sacks
1981	Ham	16.0
1982	Ham	12.5
1983	Ham	10.0
1984	Ham	18.5
1985	Ham	16.0
1986	Ham	18.0
1987	Ham	17.0
1988	Ham	25.0
1989	Ham	15.0
1990	Ham	7.0
1991	Ham	2.0

COVINGTON, GROVER, Elected as a Player, 2000. Began his CFL career in 1981 when he joined the Hamilton Tiger-Cats. For eleven years he played the defensive end position and was named CFL sack leader in 1988 with 25 sacks. Covington still holds the CFL's all-time quarterback sack record with 157 sacks. Covington was named CFL All-Star four times, Eastern All-Star seven times, Schenley Most Outsanding Defensive Player and was the James McCaffrey Trophy winner. Grover Covington played in four Grey Cup games, winning in 1986

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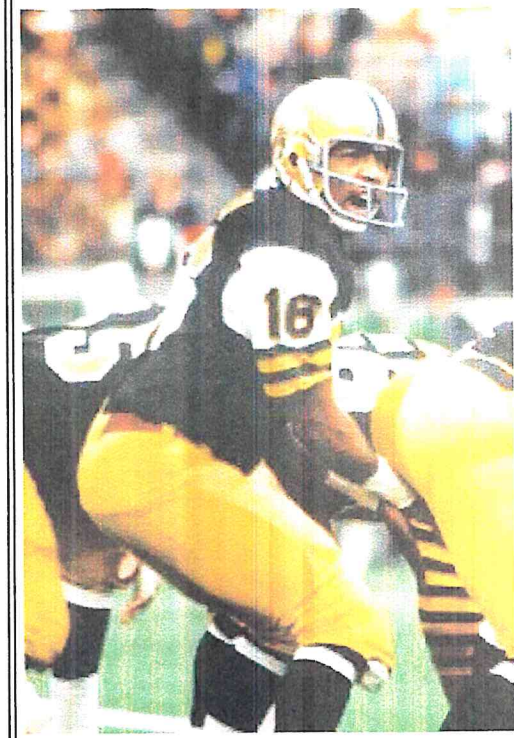
Chuck Ealey -Hamilton Tiger Cats-Quarterback 1972-74

-courtesy - In Their Words - By Ron Musselman - The Toledo Blade - July 17,2005



Chuck Ealey is a folk hero, both in his hometown of Portsmouth, Ohio, and in his second home of Toledo.

He's also a proven winner.

Ealey's high school team went 30-0 in his three years on the varsity, and he helped lead it to the Class A state poll championship as a senior in 1967. Bo Schembechler, then the head coach at Miami (Ohio), offered Ealey a partial scholarship to be the team's third quarterback and a defensive back. Ohio also talked to him once, but that was it.

Only Toledo and Dayton showed strong interest in Ealey.

Although UT's coaching staff never saw Ealey play football, Rockets coach Frank Lauterbur knew all about Ealey's athletic exploits and he sent assistant Dick Walker to Portsmouth to watch Ealey play basketball.

Walker raved about Ealey, and Lauterbur, seeking a replacement for John Schneider, offered Ealey a football scholarship.

Ealey led the Rockets to 35 consecutive wins during a three-year span from 1969-71, an NCAA record that still stands; three Tangerine Bowl victories and three Top 20 rankings. He was named Mid-American Conference Back of the Year three times, was a two-time MVP of the Tangerine Bowl and finished eighth in the voting for the Heisman Trophy in 1971 on his way to rewriting the MAC record book for passing and total offense.

As a college senior, Ealey won first-team All-American honors from the Football News, second- team recognition from United Press International and third team from the Associated Press.

Even so, he was bypassed in the 1972 NFL draft, which included 17 rounds and 442 college players.

Ealey signed with Hamilton of the Canadian Football League. He took over as the team's starting quarterback after a month. He was named rookie of the year while leading the Tiger-Cats to a 13-10 victory over Saskatchewan in the Grey Cup, where he was named MVP after passing for 291 yards and a touchdown and rushing for 63 yards. He also played for Winnipeg and Toronto, where a collapsed lung ended Ealey's seven-year CFL career in 1976.

"I was disappointed that I didn't have a chance to play in the NFL. But at the time, the way the world was working, the way the U.S. was working, the way the quarterback situation was working, there were only one or two black quarterbacks then. Most of them were drafted as defensive backs or wide receivers. I didn't want to do that. I sent a note to NFL teams letting everybody know that I wanted to at least have a chance to play quarterback."

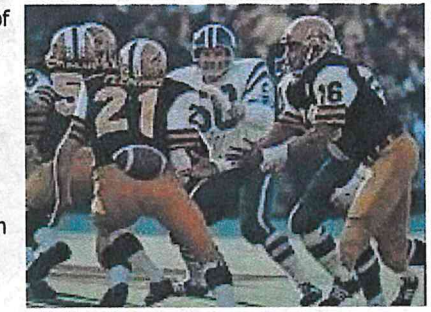
"I didn't start the first couple of games of my CFL career. I actually took over as the starter in the third or fourth game of the season and we lost the first one in Edmonton. Then, we won something like 11 straight and won the Grey Cup, which is like winning the Super Bowl in the States."

Ealey, now 55, is a financial advisor for The Investors Group in the Toronto suburb of Mississauga. He lives in nearby Brampton with his wife. They have three children and three grandchildren. Ealey's son,
Damon, played football for UT and lettered in 1995. Ealey, whose No. 16 jersey has been retired at Toledo, is a member of the UT and MAC halls of fame, but surprisingly, he is not in the College Football Hall of Fame.

Team	Year	Att	Cmp	Yds	TD
Ham	1972	253	148	2573	22
Ham	1973	309	181	2312	14
H/W	1974	277	145	1987	10
W/T	1975	196	102	1535	8
Tor	1976	245	132	1846	12
Tor	1977	240	135	1653	8
Tor	1978	206	112	1420	8

"THINGS ARE GOING great for me," Ealey said. "I'm enjoying life. Right now, a couple of guys from Toledo are looking at doing a documentary on me. I have done a couple of film clips for the project, but it's not done yet. Still, it has allowed me to do some reminiscing about my football career, and our great 35-0 teams at Toledo.
"When you go through something like that, you're just kind of just playing the game. You're going day by day and you don't really think about the streak, or about losing. You're thinking about the next game."
"EVEN AFTER MY first season at Toledo, people didn't even give our winning streak much thought. Then it started building and people started saying, 'Oh, now it's at two years.' The next thing you know, it's three years later, and by then it had become a very big deal.
"People were sitting in the aisles at our stadium to watch games. It was a great time in my life, something I'll never forget. We weren't Ohio State or Oklahoma, but we felt we could compete with just about anybody."
"Ken Dorsey of Miami [Fla.] had a chance to tie my record of 35 consecutive games started and won by a quarterback in the [2003] Fiesta Bowl [against Ohio State], but he didn't get it. I was very happy about that. It wasn't so much about me, but my teammates. A lot of people took a lot of pride in the streak and that 35-0 record. Even though it was a quarterback record, it was still a record we could hold onto in Toledo."
"I STARTED MY junior and senior years in high school, and I played on the team my sophomore year. I didn't think it was that unusual to go 30-0, but I found out that it was pretty special when I got to the University of Toledo and started talking to all my teammates there."

From A Passing Game - By Frank Cosentino - Blizzard Publishin Inc. - 1995 - Pg.60



The 1972 Grey Cup Game was played before 33,953 spectators and came down to the last play of the game, a 34-yard field goal kicked by 19-year-old Ian Sunter. It was only his third appearance in the game. He kicked an extra point and two field goals and earned the Canadian Player of the Game Award. The Game's most valuable player was selected as Chuck Ealey.

It was a glowing finish to an exceptional football year in Hamilton. With the addition of AstroTurf and a new east side stand, which converted shabby Civic Stadium into immaculate Ivor Wynne Stadium, the city was awarded the Grey Cup game, put on an amazingly successful show. The Cats ran up a 10 game winning streak. won the Schenley with Henley, and the Rookie award with Ealey and won two player awards in the final game. All that and the Grey Cup, too. It will be a hard act to follow.

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Darren Flutie - Wide Receiver -

Local star finds success north of the border
By John Goode, Boston.com Correspondent,November19, 2004

NATICK, Massachusetts -- He is considered one of the greatest Canadian Football League receivers of all-time. Darren Flutie, Doug Flutie's younger brother, played 12 seasons in the CFL before retiring in 2002 as the league's all-time leader in receptions (972) and second all-time in receiving yards (14,359). During his career, Flutie scored 66 touchdowns, averaged 14.8 yards per catch and played in four Grey Cup games, winning twice.

"I am very thankful and no question am very proud of (my career in the CFL)," said Flutie. "I was a borderline guy in the NFL. The opportunity to go up to Canada and play was just a blessing for me and my family. I am certainly proud of what I accomplished, but I am also very thankful for it."

Yr	Team	No.	Yds	Avg.	TD
1991	B.C.	52	860	16.5	6
1992	B.C.	90	1,336	14.8	4
1993	B.C.	79	1,068	13.5	5
1994	B.C	111	1,731	15.6	8
1995	B.C.	59	893	15.0	2
1996	Edm	86	1,362	15.8	6
1997	Edm	90	1,313	14.6	9
1998	Ham	98	1,386	14.1	5
1999	Ham	94	1,155	13.8	7
2000	Ham	79	1,120	14.2	4
2001	Ham	80	1,206	15.1	6
2002	Ham	64	929	14.5	4

These days, Flutie has returned to his hometown of Natick with his wife Terri and their two children, Taylor, 9, and Troy, 8.

"We bought our first house in Franklin (Massachusetts) and we had promised each other that by the time our kids got to be school age we wanted to move back to Natick because we love the community," said Flutie. "We knew the people in Natick and knew the teachers that would be teaching our children. It was important for us to be involved in the Natick community because we think so highly of it."

Flutie keeps a close eye on the Natick High football team, where his nephew Billy Flutie was the starting quarterback this year.

"It's really neat that he plays for Tom Lamb," said Flutie. "My brother Bill (Billy's father) played for Tom Lamb, Doug played for Tom Lamb, and I played for Tom Lamb. I think the world of him (Lamb). For us it's just a joy to watch him and to seem him grow and develop."

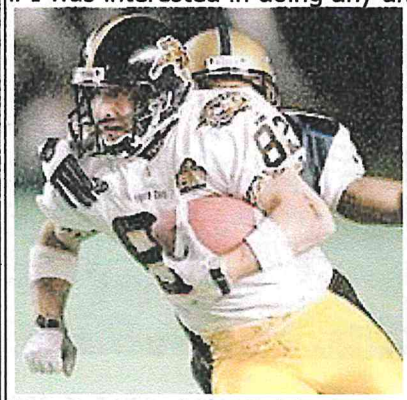
With his football career behind him, Flutie is now the Vice President of Sales for the Merrill Corporation, a financial printer in Boston.

"I interviewed with a couple of financial printers and ultimately interviewed with Pete Cronan - my boss at Merrill

Corporation," said Flutie. "We have a strong Boston College connection and a link with professional football. I am beyond enjoying it and it has totally surpassed my expectations of how much I would enjoy it."

Flutie is still involved with the CFL as well, serving as an analyst on CFL broadcasts. Flutie was given the chance to audition for the analyst broadcasting position shortly after he retired and at first was very hesitant.

"When I retired in 2002 I had retired to stay home with my family and didn't necessarily think my playing days were over," said Flutie. "About two months later the CBC (Canadian Broadcast Corporation) called me and asked if I was interested in doing any analyst work for the CFL.



"I wasn't interested because I wanted to stay home. They said come up, audition and if you don't like it at least we get the audition. I went up and they were very impressed and they did whatever it took to get me up there. I ended up getting the job and going up there."

Flutie still loves playing sports, especially basketball and soccer. He enjoys anything he can do with his family, particularly coaching his children's sports teams. He coaches his son's Pop Warner football team and basketball teams and his daughter's basketball and soccer teams.

Flutie grew up playing sports in Natick. He enjoyed an outstanding football career at Natick High School and then enjoyed success playing for Boston College. Flutie's freshman season at B.C. was Doug's senior season when he won the Heisman Trophy (1984).

"Coming out of Natick I had a few different options, but my thinking was why not go to Boston College the school that gave my brother such a great opportunity," said Flutie. "I know I am going to get an opportunity. It's local, it's respected and there is a strong B.C. network once you graduate. To me it was a no brainer.

"A lot of people said why are you following your brothers footsteps because you will always be Doug's little brother. That's something I am proud of. I am proud of what he accomplished and proud to be his younger brother."

After college, Flutie played one season in the NFL with the San Diego Chargers and was with the Phoenix Cardinals for a short period. Soon after, Flutie joined his older brother in the CFL signing with the B.C. Lions in 1991.

"I did love the CFL, but like most players the money is a lot better in the NFL," said Flutie on whether he ever considered trying to get back to the NFL.

"At one point during the 96-97 season when I was at the top of my career I had looked at going back (to the NFL) and had some offers (Kansas City Chiefs, Dallas Cowboys) to go back. It just wasn't enough of a commitment from the NFL teams to make that jump from the Canadian Football League."

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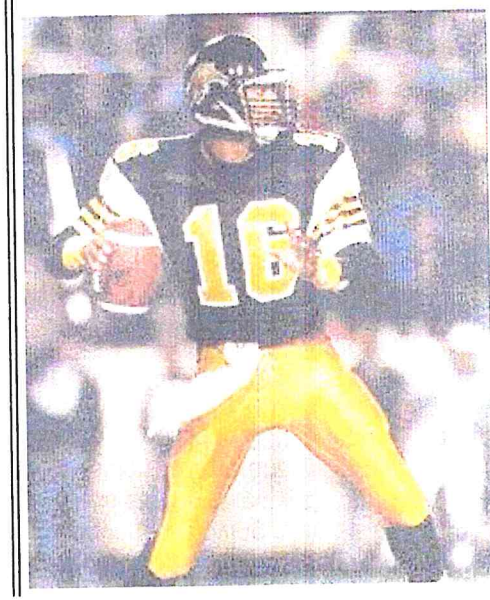
Don McPherson - Quarterback- 1991-93 - Syracuse

Team: Tiger Cats Position: QB

Don had an outstanding collegiate career with Syracuse. Leading the Orangemen to an 11-0-1 record in 1987 and finishing as the nations top ranked passer ahead of Troy Aikman. McPherson finished runner-up in voting to Tim Brown who had an outstanding season with Notre Dame. McPherson was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles and spent time on the roster but did not see any regular season action. He shuffled around with a few clubs before signing with the CFL Hamilton Tiger Cats in August 1991. McPherson filled in for an injured Damon Allen late in 1992 and had success.



He left the biggest mark in the Eastern Semi-final versus the Ottawa Rough Riders at Ivor Wynne Stadium in November '92. Hamilton was trailing at the half and McPherson entered the game leading Hamilton to a comeback victory. The win was clinched with a last second Paul Osbaldiston field goal on the snowy turf for a 29-28 victory. The win opened the eyes of Tiger Cat management and when John Gregory opened camp for the 1993 season McPherson was named the clubs starting quarterback. McPherson struggled as the starter throwing 21 interceptions and just 6 touchdowns. Hamilto was desperate for some form of quarterbacking and McPherson rotated with the likes of Bob Torrance, Lee Saltz and Todd Dillon, it was a desperate end to the season and the club finished 6-12. McPherson did not return to Hamilton in 1994 as he move on to Ottawa and a year later was out of football..

By John Entine - Dark Thoughts - September 1999 - Jon Entine Online -
Drafted in the sixth round by Philadelphia, McPherson backed up Randall Cunningham for two years without taking a regular-season snap. But he holds no grudges against the Eagles. "Buddy Ryan was one of the few

coaches to even give African-Americans a shot." McPherson says. "Most teams would not keep a black on the roster as the backup." When McPherson was released, he drifted to the Canadian Football League, long a refuge for "run and shoot" style African-American quarterbacks who never got a look in the NFL.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1991	Ham	52	22	326	42.3	2	2
1992	Ham	77	37	680	48.1	6	5
1993	Ham	368	152	2242	41.3	6	21

McPherson lost the intensity for the game, retiring four years later. "I really believed all along that I would get a fair shot, but I was fighting the system. There was so much preparation. I don't want to feel regret. I don't want to feel bitter. But in the end I was completely disrespected. They took my heart out."

White quarterbacks who didn't fit the mold, such as Doug Flutie, didn't get much of a chance, either, and were often forced to try their hand in the CFL. That's changed in recent years. The days when a classic drop-back passer like Joe Kapp, Sonny Jurgensen—or Doug Williams—could sit in the pocket are over. All the coaches are looking for "athleticism"—a word that not too many years ago resonated with racial undertones, including "less intelligent." "That used to be a code word to describe a black quarterback whom a coach wanted to shift to receiver of defensive back" says Green. "Now, with the speed and strength in the game, we all need athletic quarterbacks,"

"Coaches and the public have expectations, stereotypes, of how good you can be," mused Don McPherson, who currently consults for youth-violence prevention programs. Although he had a bitter experience in his brief professional career, he now believes such prejudices are not just a black-and-white proposition. In his second-to-last year in the game, a dismal 1993 season with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, McPherson found himself being replaced as quarterback in midseason by Bob Torrance, a Canadian quarterback who had started for the University of Calgary. "It created a sensation when Torrance started." McPherson recalls, "No one believed a Canadian could compete with an American quarterback, black or white. 'Could a Canadian college quarterback play in the CFL?'—that was the story line in the media."

"I remember sitting in the stands one day in Winnipeg before his first start, trying to calm his butterflies, and it really hit me hard: *Wow, everyone just assumes he will fail.* It brought back all the bad memories. I felt like he knew exactly what it had been like for me, for black quarterbacks trying to make it in the NFL."
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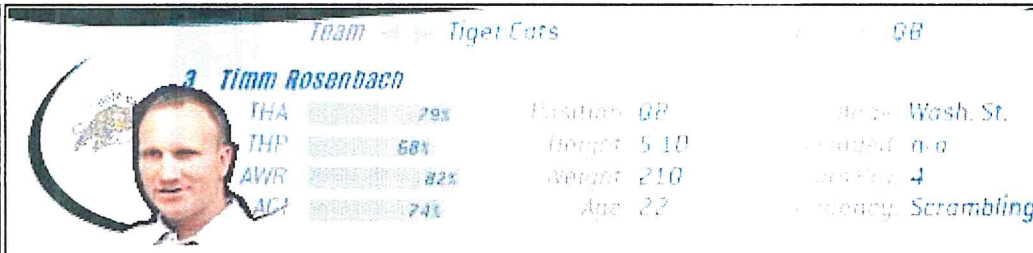
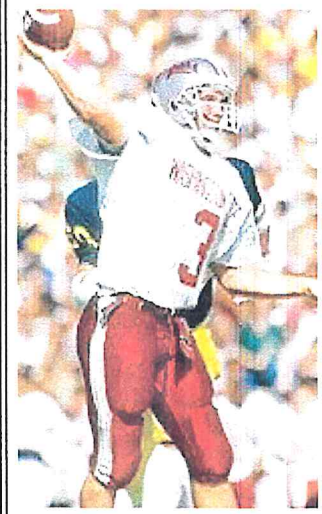


	ATT	CMP	PCT	LG	YDS	INT	TD
1994	294	155	52.7	69	2,083	10	10

July 9, 1994 – Hamilton 11 @ Edmonton 26
QB Timm Rosenbach was inconsistent under constant pressure from the Edmonton defence and completed only 9 of 21 passes for 101 and 1 interception.
July 28, 1994 – Ottawa 53 @ Hamilton 25
QB Timm Rosenbach threw his first CFL TD when he hit Ken Evraire on a 43 yard pass ad run play.



By Don Doxsie, QUAD-CITY TIMES -- August 31, 1999
Timm Rosenbach played five years in the National Football League.
In only his second season, he took every snap at quarterback for the Arizona Cardinals.
He was pulling in more than $1 million a year. He owned a 10-acre horse ranch near Gilbert, Ariz. He bought and operated his own charter fishing business in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.
This was all just a few years ago. The guy was living a dream. He was on top of the world.
What do you suppose Rosenbach, now 32, is doing these days?
He's coaching the quarterbacks at St. Ambrose University.
Don't feel too sorry for him. He's doing what he wants to do.
"I enjoy getting around and seeing things and living different places ..." Rosenbach says. "It was time to get a new start and get out of Arizona, and get things going."
Jody Sears, one of Rosenbach's receivers during his college days at Washington State, is St. Ambrose's defensive coordinator. When Rosenbach got the urge to coach last winter after a few years of dabbling in private business, Sears put him in touch with Bees head coach Todd

Sturdy and the school had a new assistant coach.
Rosenbach is one of those calm, look-you-in-the-eye, down-to-earth, give-it-to-you-straight kind of guys.
But it wasn't that long ago that he was pretty mixed up.
He came out of Washington State in 1989 and made an immediate impact with the Cardinals. In 1990, the club didn't use another quarterback all season. It didn't need to. Rosenbach was sensational. He passed for 3,098 yards and 16 touchdowns, rushed for more yardage than any other QB except Randall Cunningham, and played with a cocksure panache reminiscent of Jim McMahon.
But that reckless style got him in trouble. He sat out the 1991 season after undergoing reconstructive knee surgery. Then, in the opening game of the '92 season, he was leveled by Tampa Bay's Santana Dotson. When he regained consciousness, he was in a hospital X-ray room.
It was an eye-opening experience in more ways than one.
The next week, he suffered a separated shoulder and the injuries began to pile up. At the end of the season, he stunned observers by retiring from football. He didn't even tell the Cardinals he was leaving. There was just a quick call from his agent. He ducked all inquiries from the team and the media.
"I was banged up and I wasn't into it mentally," Rosenbach says. "I needed to get away from the game and reflect on it, see how I felt about it. I had to get a new attitude is what I needed to do ...
"I was in a situation where I was battling my head and I didn't feel comfortable with what was going on with the Cardinals and I made a decision. I don't know if I'd make the same decision today or not. But I can't really look back on it like that. I've just got to learn from what I've done."
It didn't even matter at the time that he had a year remaining on a five-year, $5.3-million contract.
"It cost me some money," he says. "But the bottom line is that if you can't play for the love of the game, you shouldn't be playing."
He says his abrupt retirement wasn't motivated completely by injuries. When he finally did do a few interviews in 1993, he referred to football as "dehumanizing." He told New York Times columnist Ira Berkow that he sensed he was turning into "an animal."
"I didn't like the pro game," he says, looking back at those confused days "The pro game takes away from the game when you're involved in it to a certain point. I was young. I was maturing but I hadn't reached my full maturity."
Rosenbach went into semi-seclusion. He married Carrie Serrano in a cowboy style wedding on his ranch. He re-enrolled at Washington State with the idea of finishing his degree.
But he couldn't get football out of his system.
Within two years, he was back playing with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats of the Canadian Football League. The team was terrible and its financial situation was worse. When Rosenbach didn't get paid, he left.
He caught on with the New Orleans Saints and whipped himself into the best shape of his life. But another injury, this time to his back, finally ended his playing career.
In the ensuing years, Rosenbach operated his fishing business in Mexico, got divorced (he lost the ranch in the settlement), and found himself yearning to become involved in football in some capacity.
His father had coached at the high school, junior college and Division I-AA levels, but Rosenbach never thought he'd end up in the profession. It took some time and soul-searching to discover this is what he wanted to do.
"It's in my blood, I guess," he says.
So here he is, in Davenport, Iowa. He's taking courses through Western Illinois University to complete that

bachelor's degree while he's teaching kids how to play a game he once denounced.
"It's a violent sport and I've come to grips with that," he says. "I understand that. But coaching the quarterback position is so much more than just coaching football. It's a cerebral thing and it's a lot of fun."
He has been here since March and hasn't been through a full-scale Midwest winter yet, but he likes the Quad-Cities so far.
"I'm back to real people now," he says. "These people are genuine out here and I enjoy that."

Hamilton Tiger Cats

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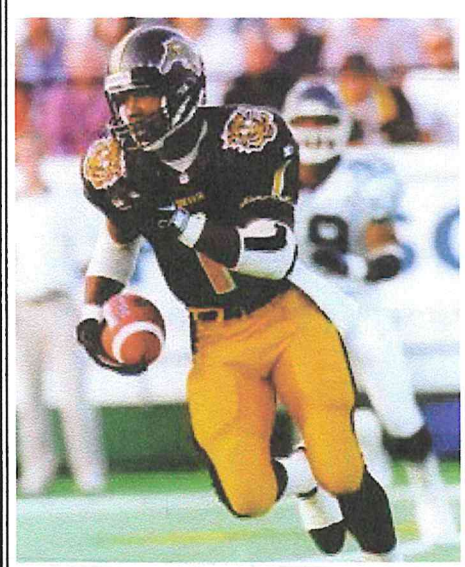
Earl Winfield - Hamilton Tiger Cats - Wide Receiver 1987-1997

Article: Pleasant change: athlete takes pay cut and runs – Stephen Brunt – Globe&Mail-May1996



If they were all Earl Winfields, the Canadian Football League would be a happier, more prosperous place, atleast for the guys paying the bills.

Find a home and stay there. Thrive in the environment of the three-down game, while giving up the notion of greener pastures. Take the money that's offered, and when the time comes to share the pain, do that as well.

A vestige of a simpler – if not always better for the athlete – time.

Yesterday, Winfield signed on for his 10th and presumably final season as a wide receiver with the Hamilton Tiger Cats. That's a full decade in the league, a full decade with the same franchise, where he holds or is closing in on most of the individual receiving records,

Last year, his best yet, with 92 catches and 13 touchdowns, he earned in the neighborhood of $100,000. This year, in times of retrenchment, he'll make substantially less. "With all that the league has been through, you can't talk about the money, because you ain't going to get a lot of money out of it right now," Winfield said. "I knew I might have to give up a little bit. I'd rather be working and making $50,000 than being at home and not making anything."

The fact is there aren't many players, even in what is often a league of last resort, who are willing to acknowledge that hard reality. Every year, the U.S. college system cranks out a wealth of football-playing talent. Every year, only a tiny fraction of that talent is invited to a National Football League camp.

Those rejected - because they're not good enough, because they're not big enough or fast enough, because they were hurt in college or they alienated a coach or scout somewhere along the line – have only a couple of options. One is real life, 9 to 5, punch the clock, put that fine athletic scholarship education to work. The other is to get paid to play football elsewhere – in arena ball, in the World League of American Football, or, for the best of the rest, in the CFL. Which certainly beats option 1. But the problem has been that there remained very much a sense that each year's talented arrivals were just passing through. Very, very few come with the intention to become career CFLers. Their plan is to put in a year or two in exotic foreign locales such as Saskatchewan or Steeltown, get noticed and then head south.

The disparity in salary is such that it's entirely worthwhile taking even a long shot with an NFL team. A low-end signing bonus can be as much as a full-season CFL salary and a year on an NFL practice roster can pay three or four times what even established stars, other than quarterbacks, are making. So they come, they go; sometimes they come back to a different team and sometimes they go again. At least two of Winfield's Hamilton teammates from last year, cornerback Eric Carter and middle linebacker Mike O'Shea, a University of Guelph homebrew no less, are gone in pursuit of that dream. The same story holds for every team in the league. And as every once-a-year observer of the CFL will tell you, that's part of the problem, You can't tell the names without a scorecard; you can't pick a hero without worrying that he'll be history before you know it. Not like the good old days.

Winfield did it himself back in 1989, taking a flyer with the San Francisco 49ers, Then he was cut and came back in time to play in the final nine games of the season, the playoffs and the Grey Cup. After that he shelved the notion of heading somewhere else, even as so many others lived the itinerant life, so many quarterbacks who threw him the ball, so many receivers who played at the other end of the line. Winfield never made the big score – at least financially – but he did build a career, find a second home and become if not Jerry Rice, then one of the little big stars of the CFL, the toast of Ivor Wynne.

To close it out Winfield would like to get back to the championship once more, especially with

Receiving

Year	No	Yds	Avg.	Lg	TD
1987	38	746	19.6	81	2
1988	60	1213	20.2	73	8
1989	15	324	21.6	56	3
1990	62	1054	17.0	75	13
1991	45	874	19.4	77	4
1992	52	880	16.9	80	9
1993	61	1076	17.6	79	5
1994	71	1211	17.1	79	12
1995	92	1496	16.3	57	13
1996	48	783	16.3	50	4
1997	29	462	15.9	59	3

Hamilton as host of the game this year. And after that, after a 10-year hiatus, to the working man's grind – unless there are extenuating circumstances.

"I will be officially retired after this year," he said, "unless there's something special, or something huge, or I have such a great, great year they won't allow me to retire."

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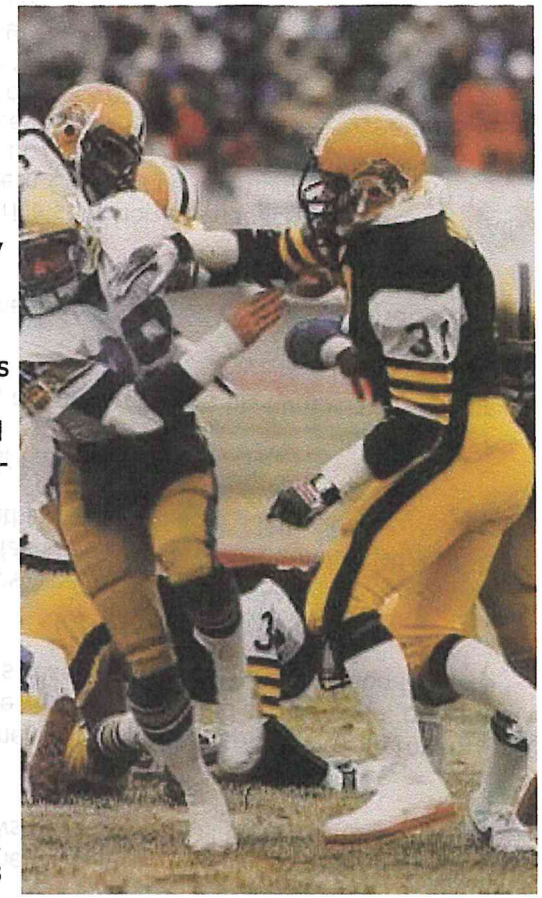
Ben Zambiasi - Linebacker - 1978-88 - University of Georgia

Class of 2004 - By Ted Michaels CFL Editor - Sports Network



If the Canadian Football League needed a marketing slogan to attract US-born players to Canada, perhaps Ben Zambiasi said it best.

"It's a league that allows undersized players to overachieve."

And that possibly best describes why Zambiasi will be heading into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame this fall. The native of Valdosta, Georgia, came to Canada in 1978 after a brief stint with the Chicago Bears. For the next 10 seasons, the 6-foot-228 pound middle linebacker was part of a ferocious Hamilton Tiger-Cat defense that helped lead the Tabbies to four Grey Cup appearances before finally winning the big prize in 1986. Zambiasi tore up the league, virtually from day one. In his inaugural season, he grabbed the Most Outstanding Rookie Award and was named an Eastern All-Star and CFL All-Star. In all, he was a league All-Star six times, an Eastern All- Star eight times, and won the Most Outstanding Defensive Player Award in 1979.

The Tiger-Cats won the Grey Cup in 1986, and while many would think that was the highlight of the 1986 season, Zambiasi begs to differ.

"The 1986 Grey Cup win in Vancouver was almost anti-climactic," said Zambiasi. "We had a two-game total point Eastern Final against Toronto the previous two weeks. After the first quarter of Game Two, we were trailing the Argos by 26 points. To come back and win the series was just beyond belief. I think that in the minds of every player, coach and fan, we were going to win the game against Edmonton. Even though up until that point, I had never been on the winning side against the Eskimos."

Zambiasi keeps busy these days as the produce manager of a local food chain. And, he admits he would like to

get into coaching, so he expressed gratitude when he told me that Tiger-Cats head coach Greg Marshall had invited him to be a guest coach at Tiger-Cat training camp, which starts May 22. Marshall, no doubt, is hoping some of the Zambiasi magic rubs off on the players he'll be coaching. Zambiasi, on the other hand, just wants his charges to realize what a great game the CFL is.

"I knew from the first time I came up here, from the wider field, to the extra man, the unlimited motion, special teams, that my size was perfect for this league. But, this league allows guys like Pinball Clemons, (current Argo head coach) and myself to play. You can't measure a guy's heart."

The Hall of Fame has strict criteria when it comes to inducting new members, and that criteria goes through several levels. While it's easy for some to point the finger and criticize who's in, and who should be in, or slam the selection process itself, there is a protocol to follow. In Zambiasi's case, it was almost a revelation from his nominator.

Mark DeNobile, a former Tiger-Cat employee, was the organizer of last year's annual Wall of Honor ceremonies, where the names of former Tiger-Cats are put up on the south side facade at Ivor Wynne Stadium. During last year's event, which saw Zambiasi join other illustrious players, something struck him as a little odd.

"He was the only guy on the Wall of Honor, who wasn't in the Hall of Fame," said DeNobile.

"I thought it was long overdue. He was a stalwart in that whole era, and if you look at his numbers, they rank right up there with the best of them .."

So, DeNobile officially put forth the University of Georgia grad's name to the selection committee for discussion.

College: University of Georgia (1974-77) *** First-team All-America selection at linebacker in 1977 *** All-America selection in 1976 *** Helped Georgia to 1976 Southeastern Conference Championship and 10-1 regular season mark *** First-team All-Southeastern Conference in 1977 *** First-team All-Southeastern Conference in 1976 *** Second-team All-Southeastern Conference in 1975 *** Through 1994, Georgia's all-time leader in tackles with 467 *** Totaled a school-record 246 solo tackles during his four-year career *** Set Bulldog mark with 96 solo tackles in 1977 *** Led Georgia in tackles for three straight years (1975-1977) *** Fourth on Georgia charts in career tackle assists through 1994 with 221 *** Chevrolet Defensive Player of the Game in 41-0 1976 rout of Clemson *** UPI Defensive Player of the Week in 1976 21-0 victory over Alabama *** Received 1977 annual William K. Jenkins Award as Georgia's top lineman *** Named Georgia's Outstanding Defensive Player in 1975 and 1976 *** Recepient of 1977 Wallace Butts Memorial Award, presented annually to the Georgia football player who "pays the best price" to be a success *** Awarded 1977 Wallace Butts Family Scholarship, given annually to the Bulldog who best combines athletic and academic skills *** Academic All-SEC in 1976 *** Hall-of-Fame coach Vince Dooley says: "In all my years of coaching, I never coached a more intense and tenacious football player than Ben Zambiasi."

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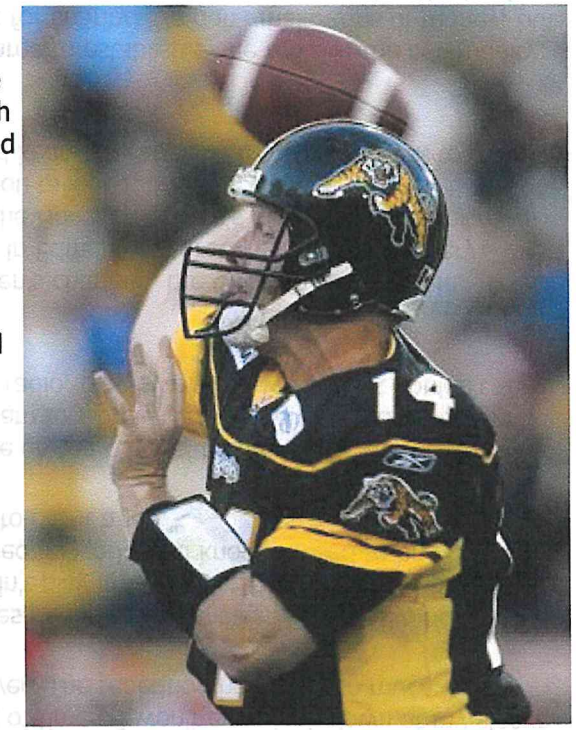
Danny McManus -Quarterback-1998-present- Florida State

December 1, 1999 - By Anya Wassenberg



A native of Hollywood, Florida, Danny McManus graduated from Florida State College in 1988, then spent a couple of years in the NFL with the Kansas City Chiefs. 2005 is McManus' 15th year with the CFL, having earned Grey Cup rings in 1990 with Winnipeg and in 1994 with the B.C. Lions and 1999 with Hamilton. Perhaps surprisingly, football wasn't his initial goal.

"Baseball was my first sport," he explains. "My brother used to play quarterback in highschool. I went (there) after him. But the guy who coached my brother, he saw me throw the football, and that's how I got started as quarterback." So why did he keep playing? "It was fun. It was fun until the first time I got hit in highschool.."

Playing QB means always having to say you're sorry, but the public role is something McManus seems to breeze through with an enviable aplomb. "I learned it in college, my coach at Florida State (said) when you win, the head coach and the quarterback get all the praise, and when you lose, the head coach and the quarterback get all the blame." He reflects for a moment. "And I don't mind that. I would rather take the blame, have the media come after me, than go after my players. If something went wrong, I'll take the majority of the blame. Now if we win, I push everything to the players. It's just been my style."

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1998	Ham	584	333	4864	57.0	24	19
1999	Ham	612	365	5334	59.3	28	16
2000	Ham	516	271	4200	52.5	21	29
2001	Ham	571	326	4465	57.1	19	9
2002	Ham	604	318	4531	52.6	23	30
2003	Ham	416	221	2869	53.1	9	15
2004	Ham	590	331	5034	56.1	29	30
2005	Ham	364	203	2544	55.8	11	18

It's a style that makes for good team morale, and teammates like Mike Morreale and Darren Flutie have always been quick to defend Danny 'Mac' when he's under media fire. McManus readily acknowledges the Ti-Cats locker room chemistry. "It's been a pretty good group of guys in the locker room. You know, you've gotta have a thick skin just to be in our locker room - no one is too high, no one is too low. If a guy knows you're not going to bad mouth in the

papers, then you know they've got respect for you. I've never done that to anybody before. Certainly, there's probably been times I would want to say something, but it's just not my nature to do that."

And from the locker room to the playing field? "Basically, on this squad, (my role is) just get the guys in the offence in the right box, and then orchestrate our game plan. We don't signal in our plays, I call all the plays during the game. So, during the week, it's me, the other quarterbacks and the coaches all working together to find out exactly what we'll do on a run. Once we're in the field, I try to orchestrate it."

Without signalling plays, McManus keeps the game plan close at hand - actually, written on his wrist. "I keep all the plays on there, by down and by distance, by placement on the field. We go in maybe with our top five plays, so when I go to a different zone, then I've got to switch the calling around. It's kind of easy - but a lot of quick decisions." And obviously, a lot of preparation beforehand. "A lot of times, I won't even look down at my sleeve, 'cause during the week, we go over all the the plays, over and over. The repetition helps out so much."

After 10 years in the CFL, you know Danny Mac isn't in it for widespread fame or riches. Apparently, he's just a guy who loves to play ball. "If it ever became a job, then I wouldn't play it anymore. It's still fun. It's hard to use that word for what I do - calling it a job - seeing the way other people work. You know, it used to be 9 to 5, now it's more like 8 to 8. We don't work that way, so it's hard for me to call it a job."

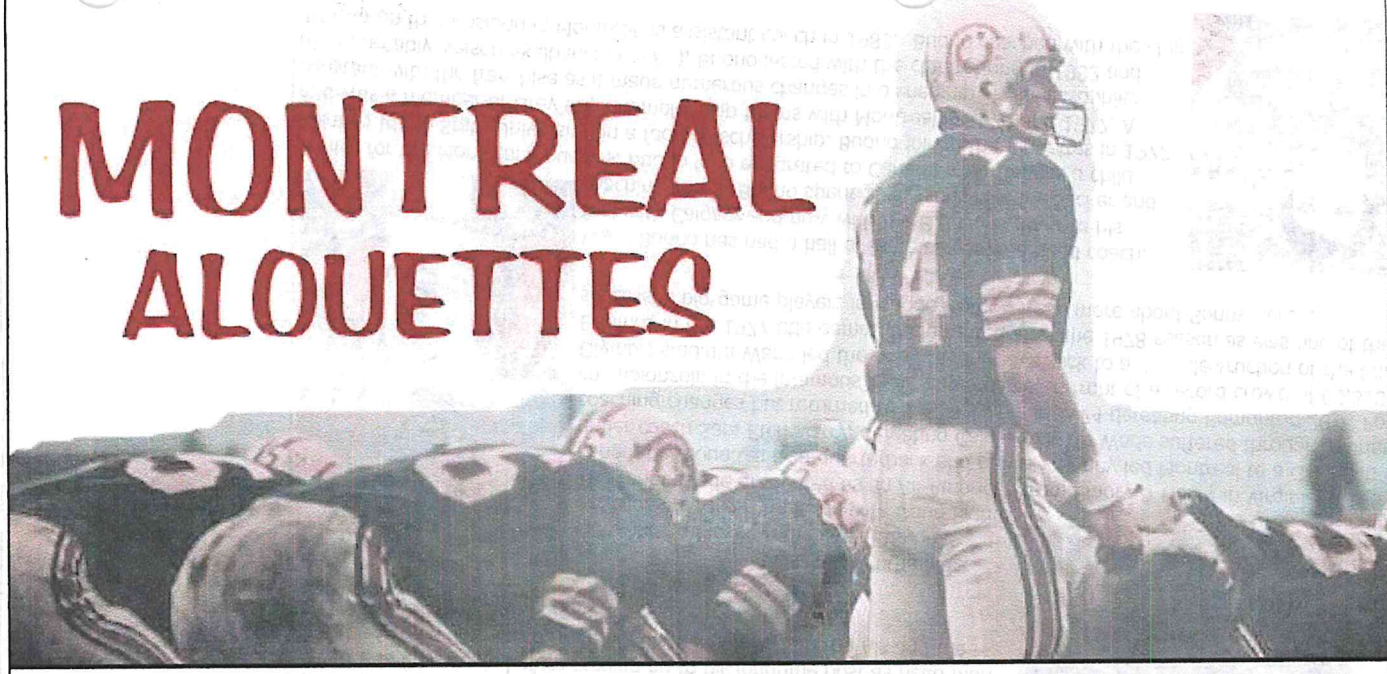
And after football? "I've had some thoughts about it. I'd like to be on the other side of football, on the management side. I guess my biggest thing would be to get a team together, like a general manager type, let the coaches handle (day to day stuff). I've also thought of doing radio, play by play as well. I just couldn't see working 9 to 5."

Along with some of the other Cats, McManus is involved in children's charities, the Children's Hospital in particular. "I just got a soft spot for kids," he explains. "I started in Edmonton, three years ago, for every touchdown pass, I donate $100." He's also a frequent visitor to the Hospital. "There's guys in that locker room that like to come down with me. You come to understand that, you talk about sports, it's just a game. But those kids that are in that hospital, that's life, that's reality. So I try and keep a balance with that. It's great to go in there and give the kids a smile."

It's also a good way for him and other players from outside the area to establish some roots in the community. "Yes - to give back," he agrees. "A lot of guys in the CFL do a lot for charity. We don't make tons of money, but we give a lot of things back to the comunity, doing promo stuff. I know Chris is doing things at the Children's Hospital, Phil, Mike.. That's the big thing I like about the CFL, how much we try and give back."

To borrow the title of Robert Neilson's 1973 book on Ti-Cat legend Garney Henley, you could call him a gentleman and a Tiger.

MONTREAL ALOUETTES



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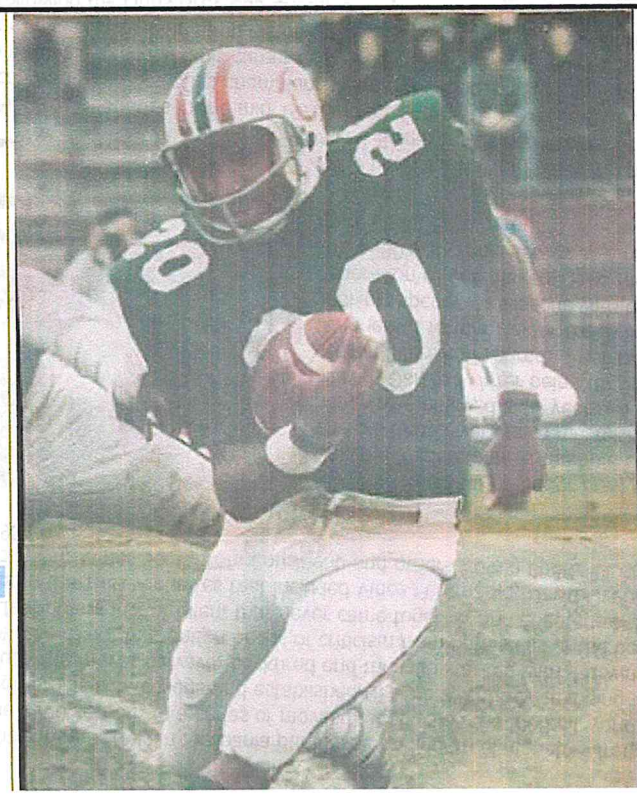
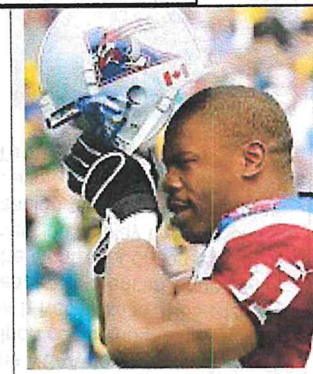
Choose an Alouette

1970'S



Johnny Rodgers #20

Dubbed the "Ordinary Superstar" Rodgers shocked the football world after leading the Nebraska Corn Huskers to the Rose Bowl in 1972. The San Diego Chargers selected Rodgers in the first round of the 1973 draft, but he rebuffed the NFL to join the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League.
"I had always dreamed of having $100,000, and San Diego didn't offer me anything close to that," he said. "So I went to Montreal, and they offered me what I was looking for right out of the gate."
Rodgers played four seasons in the CFL, winning Rookie of the Year, Most Valuable Player and All-Pro honors, along with a Grey Cup. He had the personal glory but still longed to prove himself in the United States. In 1977, the 5-foot-10, 180-pounder got into tip-top condition and finally became a Charger.
"I did all I could do in the CFL," he said. "So I came back to try because I wanted to see just how good I could be."
Read more about Johnny here...



Lawrence Phillips came to the Montreal Alouettes in 2002 following another failed NFL attempt with the San Francisco 49ers. Phillips dominated the world league in 2001 as the only back in that leagues history to eclipse 1,000 yards rushing. The troubled back turned his sights on CFL defences and was a force to be reckoned with in his first season with the Alouettes that culminated in a Grey Cup championship. read more here...

1980'S
1990'S

Grey Cup

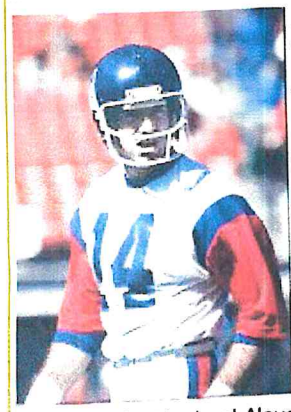
Index

Entrepreneur Nelson Skalbania purchased the Montreal Alouettes from Sam Berger following the 1980 season. In a series of moves that shocked the football world Skalbania signed several high profile U.S. college and established NFL stars; entirely changing the face of the Montreal club. The moves however backfired and the club stacked with 4 down superstars limped to a 2-14 record, not to mention heaps of criticism from both sides of the border. The 1981 team was a fascinating mix of talent that never came together and adapted to the Canadian game. Read about the 1981 Alouettes that included Vince Ferragamo, David Overstreet, Bill "White Shoes" Johnson, James Scott, Tom Cousineau and others from a Sports Illustrated feature from July 1981 here...

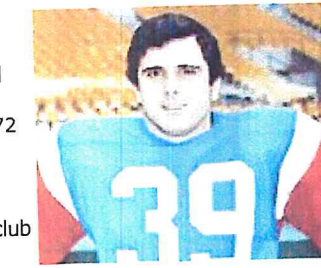
Turner Gill one of the all-time great quarterbacks produced by the NCAA powerhouse Nebraska. Upon completing his senior year with Nebraska in 1983 the 2nd team All-American signed with the Montreal Concordes and went on to play two seasons leading the club to consecutive playoff births. read more about Turner here...

Fred Biletnikoff was a Super Bowl champion with the Oakland Raiders named the MVP of the 1977 Super Bowl. The crafty receiver was a master route runner with sure hands who enjoyed a 13 year hall of fame career in the NFL all with Oakland. After being unceremoniously released by the Raiders following the 1978 season Biletnikoff retired. Prior to the 1979 CFL season Alouettes head coach Joe Scannella a former Raider coach contacted Biletnikoff and after some convincing the 37 year-old spent two seasons with the Alouettes, imparting wisdom and stick-um to a new generation of CFL players. Fred moved on as a coach with the Calgary Stampeders in the late 1980's and now serves as a receivers coach with the re-born Oakland Raiders. read more about Fred here...

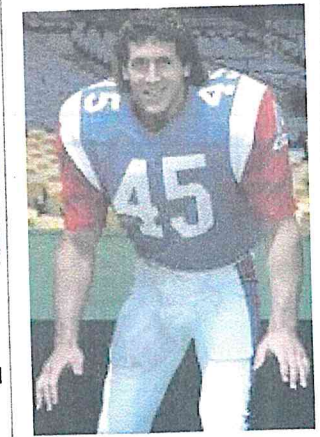
Marv Levy the Hall of Fame NFL coach spent 5 seasons as head coach of the Montreal Alouettes in the mid 1970's compiling a 50-34-4 record and capturing two Grey Cup championships. Levy credits his time in Canada as invaluable in shaping his career as a head coach. He coached some prominent players in team history and had great success. Levy left Montreal following the clubs Grey Cup Championship in 1977 and went on to coach the Kansas City Chiefs before moving on to his longtime post as head man with the Buffalo Bills. Read more about Marv's stay with the Als and the Canadian Football League here...



Jesse "Sonny" Wade was named the Most Outstanding Player in the Grey Cup on 3 occasions, a record he holds with Doug Flutie. The rangy Wade graduated as an All-American from Emory & Henry in Virginia in 1969 and joined the Alouettes as a quarterback and punter. Sonny led Montreal to a Grey Cup in 1970 under coach Sam Etchevarry, defeating Calgary 23-10. Wade suffered through injuries and coaching changes but returned to the big game in 1974 defeating Edmonton 20-7. For his final championship in the infamous 1977 staple game, in front of a record crowd of 68,318 at Olympic stadium Wade led the potent Montreal attack to a 41-6 destruction of the Edmonton Eskimos in the 1977 title game. Wade retired after the 1978 season as was one of the most successful big-game players in league history. Read more about Sonny here...



Wally Buono has had a hall of fame career as a head coach, first with Calgary and now with the B.C.Lions. Prior to his coaching career Buono spent 10 seasons as a linebacker and punter for the Montreal Alouettes. Buono who emigrated to Canada from Italy as a child went to Idaho State University on a football scholarship. Buono joined the Alouettes in 1972 and was a member of Grey Cup championship teams with Montreal in 1974 and 1977. A constant with the franchise as it made numerous changes in ownership and philosophies (most notably Nelson Skalbania in 1981), Buono lasted with the club retiring in 1982 and moving on to a position in Montreal as assistant coach in 1983. Buono coached with the club



The Buffalo Bills drafted Ohio State Lineman Tom Cousineau with the first overall selection in the 1979 NFL draft. When the Bills played hard ball in salary negotiations, the Ohio State alum turned to the CFL and signed a lucrative multi-year contract with Montreal Alouettes. Cousineau made it to the Grey Cup with Montreal in his first year and was named the top defensive player in the game.

	until 1986 when the franchise ceased operations. Read more about Wally as an Alouette here...	The lineman cut his ties with the Als after the 1981 season and signed with the NFL Cleveland Browns. read more here...

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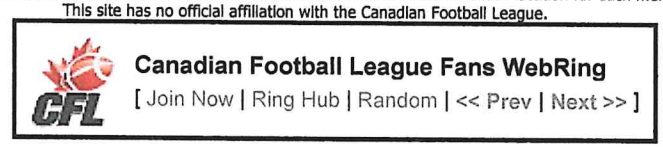


STICK IT TO 'EM, FREDDIE

The years show in his face: tired, watery eyes with crow's-feet, a forehead with a deep latticework of wrinkles and a scalp that has lost most of its thatching. As the uniform is peeled off, the body of an old warrior emerges: knobby, scarred knees and a midsection without elastic. By all appearances, Fred Biletnikoff has had it as an athlete.

Ah, but not quite. At 37, after a year out of the game, the former star wide receiver of the Oakland Raiders is again running his celebrated, finely calibrated pass routes, feeling the slap of leather in his sticky hands once more, calmly rising to go back to the huddle after another hit by an embarrassed cornerback. The fourth-leading pass catcher in NFL history, Biletnikoff now plays for the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League.

In three games he has caught six passes for 75 yards and no touchdowns. He started fast, with five receptions in the first game, but since then, with defenses stacked against him and a quarterback, Joe Barnes, who is bothered by good pass rushing and a sore arm, the ball has been everywhere but in his hands.

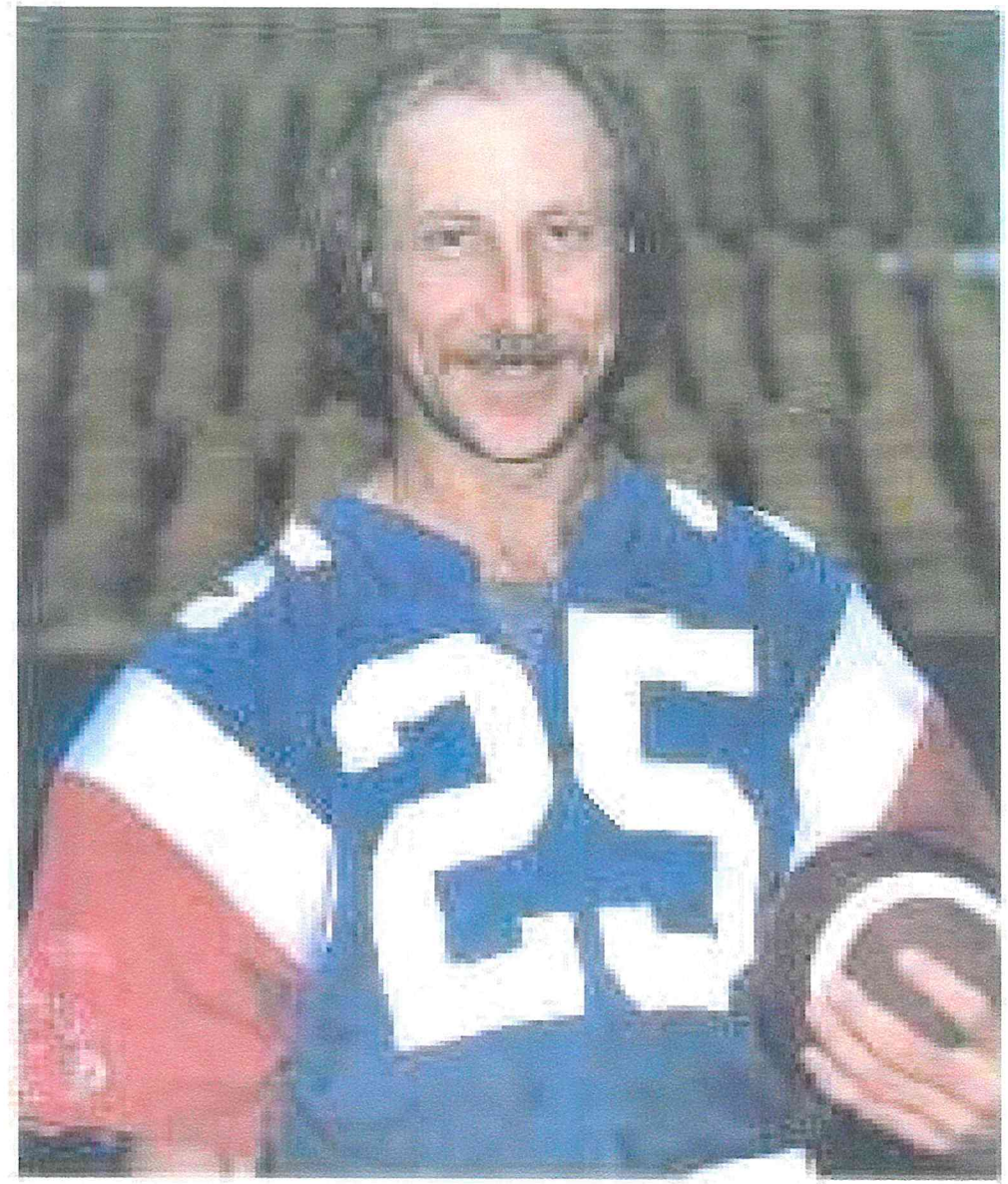
Last week Biletnikoff was shut out as the Alouettes scored all their points in a rain-swept fourth quarter and beat the Hamilton Tiger-Cats 17–14 for their first victory of the year. When the winning field goal was kicked with eight seconds remaining, the players stormed the field. All except Biletnikoff, who before joining the celebration, stopped to congratulate Coach Joe Scannella.

"He knew how much it meant to me," said Scannella. "I told him, 'I'm sorry we can't throw you the ball, Fred. But we're going to get it to you yet.' "

Last year when he was dropped by the Raiders, Biletnikoff, who once earned nearly $200,000 a year, faced life without football for the first time in 14 years. At home in Valley Center, Calif., outside San Diego, he enjoyed being with his family, drew $400 a month in unemployment benefits and waited for the telephone call that never came.

Then early this year Biletnikoff phoned Scannella about two young prospects Biletnikoff had coached at a football camp. Scannella was the special teams coach for the Raiders when Biletnikoff was named Most Valuable Player in the 1977 Super Bowl. Scannella listened and said, "I'd rather have the teacher than the students." Biletnikoff thought it over and, a month later, signed.

Now he lives with his second wife, Jennifer, and 2-year-old daughter, Tracey, in a Montreal apartment. He does extra running every day to keep in shape, and he is still experimenting with playing on the larger Canadian football field. "To me he looks the same as he always did," says Scannella. "He's really taken to the team. The older guys love



him because he's older than they are. They see themselves playing until they're 37. That's what they want in life. Nobody ever wants to quit football." "I know what it's like to be out," says Biletnikoff. "It's lonely. One of the reasons I'm here is because I was told I couldn't play anymore, and I didn't believe that. And, also, it gives me a chance to be a human being again."

On the field Biletnikoff is a perfectionist, and he's a player who's ruled by well-established habit, who has found equipment that's right for him and sticks with it. After every series of downs, equipment manager Gordon Batty sticks three pieces of chewing gum in Biletnikoff's mouth and hands him a cup of water and a towel. Fred keeps his hands sticky by touching the blobs of a gummy substance he has smeared on carefully selected places on his uniform, and he uses shoulder pads that are so old he doesn't know their true age.

Biletnikoff has a special niche on the Alouettes—part teammate, part tutor, part legend. He volunteered for preseason rookie camp, mostly to get in shape, but also to let people know he cared. Last week, after the Alouettes' win, he sat at his locker, sucking on his ever-present cigarette, in the midst of youthful enthusiasm, a man still playing a kid's game. His teammates chanted and sang. Biletnikoff may be an old face in a new city, but clearly he's in familiar surroundings.

—BARRY MCDERMOTT

The old magic is still in Biletnikoff's sure hands.

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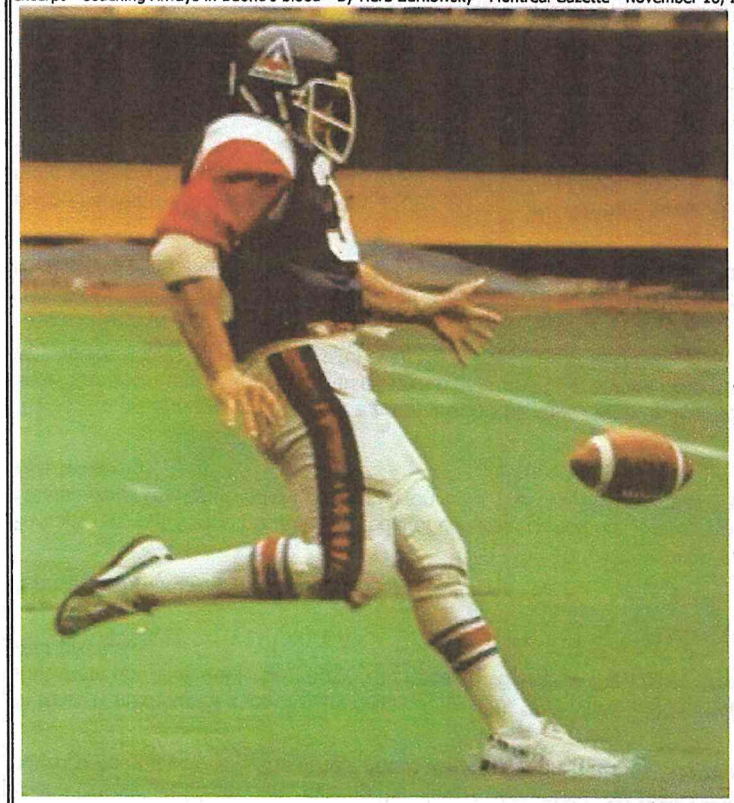
Wally Buono - Linebacker/Punter - 1972-81 - Idaho State University

excerpt - Coaching Always In Buono's blood - By Herb Zurkowsky - Montreal Gazette - November 18, 2004



"He had the personality of a coach. He always thought he was right," said Tony Proudfoot, a former defensive back and teammate of Buono, a linebacker and punter, on some great Montreal Alouettes teams in the 1970s. "We'd have debates in the huddles lasting 10 or 20 seconds. He wanted to blitz. I wanted to play zone.

"He was very sure of himself, to the point of stubbornness. You knew back then he was going to be a coach."

Proudfoot stands to be corrected. Buono is not merely a coach, he's a great coach. General manager, too.

Two seasons ago, after being told unceremoniously to get out of town by Calgary owner Michael Feterik after 13 seasons and six Grey Cup appearances with the Stampeders, Buono headed to Vancouver, taking over a franchise that was failing at the gate and only marginally better on the field.

The Lions went 11-7 in Buono's first season, a Dave Dickenson knee injury from launching a serious playoff run. They were 13-5 this year and have qualified for Sunday's Grey Cup game against Toronto. Lions season tickets were at 6,000 when Buono was hired. Last Sunday's West Division final drew more than 55,000 fans. The transformation, Ackles says, started with Buono's hiring.

"I didn't know him," said Ackles, the Lions' ball boy in a previous, and much younger, life. "But when I made the (coaching) change and he was available, I knew it was an ideal situation. He's credible and stable. What I saw is what he is: an honest guy who works hard."

Born 54 years ago in Potenza, Italy, Buono moved with his family to Montreal in 1953. He remained in the city until 1987, other than his college years at Idaho State University. Buono played 10 seasons with the Alouettes, originally backing up linebackers Mike Widger, Carl Crennel and Chuck Zapiec. He became the team's punter after Sonny Wade's retirement.

Buono, by his own admission, was never a great player, but he was a student of the game, one of the veterans on defence who took control of the unit after head coach Marv Levy's departure in 1977. He learned a lot from Levy, especially the coach's attention to detail.

"Wally was called 'Coach' from his first season. He was so knowledgeable and studious," said Alouettes president Larry Smith, a fullback on those Montreal teams. "You could tell he had his head on his shoulders and knew where he was going. Over time, you saw his character come out as he established himself."

Buono learned well from Levy, making the players accountable for their actions. Instilling pride in an organization. Delegating authority and never forgetting who sells the tickets and is responsible for the show. He wants players who can think and learn quickly, just as he did.

"A team is made up of a lot of personalities," he said. "You can't squelch them to fit your mold. A couple run off at the mouth, but I won't shut them up. That would be wrong. You need personalities. Our job is entertainment. The better the entertainment, the better you sell your product.

"I never had that swagger."

Perhaps not, but Buono has been a model of consistency and has a history of winning second only to the Alouettes' Don Matthews. The Stamps were 153-79-2 under his watch, won eight Western Division titles and three Grey Cups. Buono was named the CFL's coach of the year twice.

"I wasn't a great player and I'm not a great coach," he said. "What makes you great? I'm not playing or doing all the schemes. But I understand you must surround yourself with a good team, everyone from management, trainers and even media-relations people. That's why you're successful. I'm successful because of them.

"I'm a good people person. Do I have to be a great offence, defence or special-teams coach? Not necessarily. But I have to be great handling, dealing and leading people. If I have strengths in certain aspects of the game on top of that, that's great."

Buono has the final say in all field and personnel matters with the Lions, but isn't afraid to delegate authority to his assistants, who interact more closely with the players than he does. That doesn't matter, though. Buono's reputation has preceded him. That and his aura, for now, are enough.

"You're so confident as a player because he's been there," Lions centre Angus Reid said. "He knows what it takes to win because he has been there so many times. He's such a leader.

"He's an amazing organizer, extremely professional and leaves nothing to chance."

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Tom Cousineau - Defensive End - 1979-81 - Ohio State

Ohio State Lineman, 1979 NFL #1 rounder started career with Montreal

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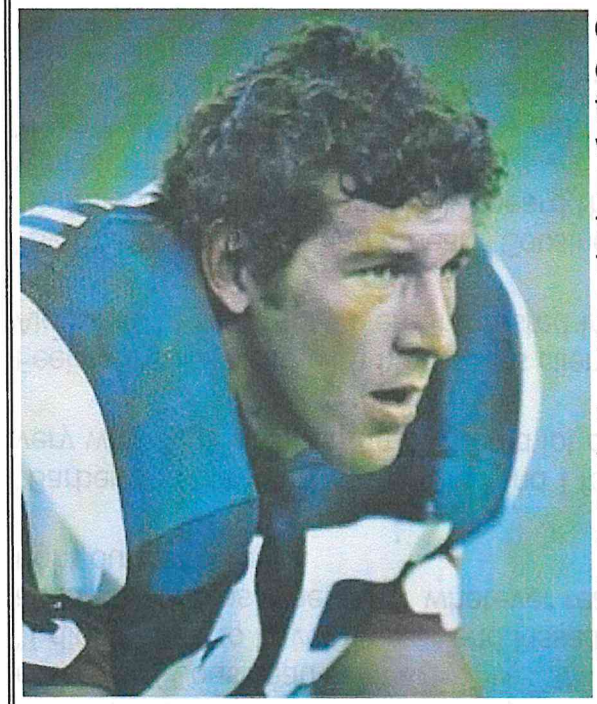


Coming out of St. Edward, Cousineau was one of the most highly-recruited football players in the country, along with being a state finalist in wrestling in both his junior and senior seasons. He was a three-year starter at Ohio State and a two-time All-America selection, being MVP of the 1977 Orange Bowl and '79 Hula Bowl. He paced the Buckeyes in total tackles two seasons.

When he came out of Ohio State, Buffalo used the No. 1 overall pick in the 1979 draft to take him. It seemed like a good fit. The Bills were struggling and needed an infusion of talent. And playing in Buffalo, just three hours up I-90 from Cleveland, meant Cousineau would be close to home.

"I was incredibly flattered to have been drafted by the Bills and I looked forward to playing with them," the now 47-year-old Cousineau said. "Chuck Knox, the coach there at that time, was a great coach. He was what they call a players' coach. I just looked upon it as a great opportunity." But that feeling lasted for only a few fleeting hours – if that.

"My relationship with the Bills got off into the weeds, and it happened almost immediately," he said.
When Cousineau went to fly on draft day from New York, where he had been for the

draft, to Buffalo for a press conference with the local media, he found when he got to the airport that there was no seat for his agent, Jimmy Walsh. On top of that, the flight was sold out.

After that matter was finally cleared up and Cousineau and Walsh arrived in Buffalo, they were supposed to go to dinner that night with Bills owner Ralph Wilson and general manager Stew Barber.

"We waited down in the hotel lobby for them, but they never showed up. They didn't even call," Cousineau said.
"I didn't need to have my rear end kissed by the Bills, but the way they treated me was about as rude as it gets. For whatever reason, the Bills were playing hardball with me right out of the gate.

"Barber had played with the Bills, and I found out later that he didn't treat any players very well. This was at a time when a lot of players were leaving Buffalo."

Feeling insulted and with his and his client's pride hurt, Walsh quickly called the Alouettes to see if they were interested in having Cousineau play for them. They did.

"By that evening, we had a deal," Cousineau said.
"Buffalo went ballistic when they heard that. They were very unhappy. They thought I was bluffing.
"I wanted to play in Buffalo. I really did. I didn't expect them to match the offer I got from Montreal, because it was very good. We told the Bills that if they were just close to that offer, I'd stay.

"But the Bills came back with an offer that was less than half that of Montreal's. I didn't want to make it about money. I really didn't. Like I said, though, the thing just got off in the weeds right away and never came back out."

So Cousineau went to the CFL and, not surprisingly, was a star there, too. He played with the Alouettes from 1979-81 and was generally regarded as the best defensive player in the league in a decade.
"They were very good to me up there," he said.

But his heart was still in the NFL, and in April 1982, the Browns' AFC Central rivals, the Houston Oilers (now the Tennessee Titans), made him an offer sheet. The Bills still had NFL rights to Cousineau and could keep him by matching the Oilers' deal, and they did.

The Bills, however, had no intention of Cousineau ever playing for them. They quickly traded him to the Browns for Cleveland's No. 1 draft pick in 1983, a third-rounder in 1984 and a fifth-rounder in '85.
It was a steep price to pay, but the Browns, who were building a pretty good defense at the time, were convinced Cousineau was worth it. They thought Cousineau would be the player who could put their defense – and hopefully even their team overall – over the top.
The whole thing floored Cousineau.

"Coming to Cleveland was a total surprise to me," he said. "I didn't expect it."
It was such big news that Sports Illustrated pictured him on the cover in the early part of training camp and ran a big story on his returning home to Cleveland.
As much as the Browns were thrilled to get Cousineau, he was just as thrilled to be with them.

"I enjoyed playing in Canada, but Cleveland is where I always hoped I would play," he said in the Browns 1982 media guide. "Success, when you don't have anyone to share it with, is a pretty meaningless experience.

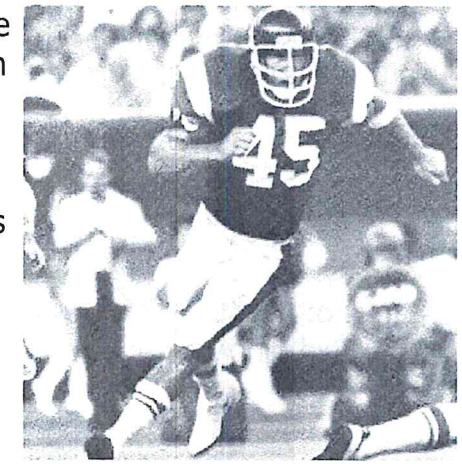
"Now I'll have people around me and at the game or watching on television who I care about, and that will help me play my best."

Cousineau was right. He did play very well and helped the Browns defense take some big strides forward. The Browns made the playoffs when Cousineau was a rookie, in the strike-shortened 1982 season, and they barely missed going back the following year. After being picked to win the division in 1984, the team, because of offensive problems, struggled to a 5-11 finish. That caused coach Sam Rutigliano to be fired halfway through the season and replaced by Marty Schottenheimer.

That marked the beginning of the end for Cousineau's time with the Browns. Even though Rutigliano made it clear he was an offensive-minded coach, Cousineau got along very well with him.

"I think the world of Sam Rutigliano," he said. "We're still great friends to this day." He likens Rutigliano to his college coach, the late Woody Hayes.

"I played all four years for Woody," Cousineau. "His last game at Ohio State (the 1978 Gator Bowl against Clemson, after which he was fired) was my last game there.
"He was fabulous. His special ability to get you to buy into the team concepts was like no one else I ever played for. Jim Tressel is doing a real good job of that now down there.
"And Woody could deliver a pre-game speech like no one else. He would get you so pumped up that when you ran out of the locker room and onto the field, your feet weren't even touching the ground.



"Sam was a little more subdued than Woody, but he was still a very powerful guy. He was very spiritual."
But despite the fact Schottenheimer had been Cousineau's defensive coordinator since the linebacker arrived in Cleveland, things didn't click as well between them.

Cousineau lasted just a year a half with Schottenheimer, spending the last two seasons of his six-year NFL career, 1986 and '87, with the San Francisco 49ers.

Cousineau was a valuable reserve with the 49ers and got to play against his former team one time, in a 1987 Sunday night nationally televised game won by San Francisco 38-24. The 49ers captured the NFC West title both seasons.

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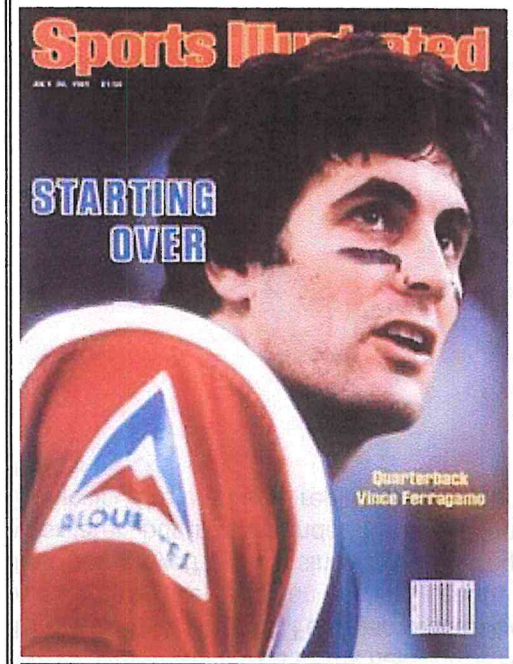
Vince Ferragamo- Quarterback- Montreal Alouettes 1981-

excerpt from"Catching up with..."CNNSI byJeffPearlman-21-07-97



Ask Vince Ferragamo why he thinks one of his former teams, the Los Angeles Rams, bolted to St. Louis in 1995 and he offers a not-so-surprising answer. "Money," he says. "Plus, maybe there wasn't such a great sense of loyalty. It's a business, you know."

Ferragamo has long known that. In April 1981, a little more than a year after quarterbacking the Rams to a near upset of the Pittsburgh Steelers in Super Bowl XIV, Ferragamo also left L.A., signing two one-year, $400,000 contracts with the Montreal Alouettes of the CFL. "It was strictly business on my part," says Ferragamo, who turned down a one-year, $300,000 offer from the Rams. "The emotional stuff was taken out of the equation. I love California, but I was thinking about my career."

Ferragamo, who had been a college star at Nebraska, thought wrong. In his one CFL season, he played less like Vince Ferragamo and more like Vince Neil, throwing 25 interceptions in 13 games. "It was more like a minor league," he says of the CFL. "We had a team on the downside with a lot of players who weren't going to be around much longer."

Year	Att	Cmp	Yds	Avg	TD	Int	LG
1981	342	175	2,182	51.2	7	25	67

Ferragamo left Canada and re-signed with the Rams for three more seasons, but he failed to rediscover the Super Bowl magic. He ended his career in 1986 after less-than-memorable stints with the Buffalo Bills and the Green Bay Packers. Ferragamo was, to a considerable degree, an athlete who could've been but never really was. There were sparks of greatness—30 touchdown passes in '80 (he first appeared on SI's cover in December of that year, next to the words RAM POWER)—but also injuries and inconsistency as he battled for the Rams' starting job. Ferragamo still goes through the what-ifs. "My whole career was spurts," he says. "When I got the chance, I'd always play well. But I was given only short periods to do it. It could've been

different. I really think so."

Nowadays Ferragamo, 43, divides his time among his family (his wife, Jodi, and daughters Venessa, 15, Cara, 13, and Jenna, 12), his Touchdown Real Estate company in Anaheim Hills, Calif., and the Vince Ferragamo Foundation, which raises money for the Special Olympics. As busy as he is, he nonetheless feels something is missing. "The thrills I had on the field in L.A. and even Montreal—you can't duplicate those in the corporate world," he says. "Sometimes I'll do a motivational speech, and that's the closest I come in terms of getting fired up. I'll be honest. I miss playing the game." *—by Jeff Pearlman*

WHAT HAPPENED: The Rams held Vince Ferragamo's rights through the 1985 offseason, when he was traded to the Buffalo Bills. But Ferragamo actually left once before, in 1981, when he departed for the Montréal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League. The Rams finished 6-10 in 1981 after Ferragamo left; it was their first non-playoff season since 1972. Ferragamo returned in 1982 and directed the Rams to the postseason one year later, but injuries ended his campaign in 1984. Jeff Kemp took over and led the Rams to the playoffs. Ironically, the man who replaced Ferragamo as the full-time starter in 1985 was a long-time CFL quarterback — Dieter Brock.

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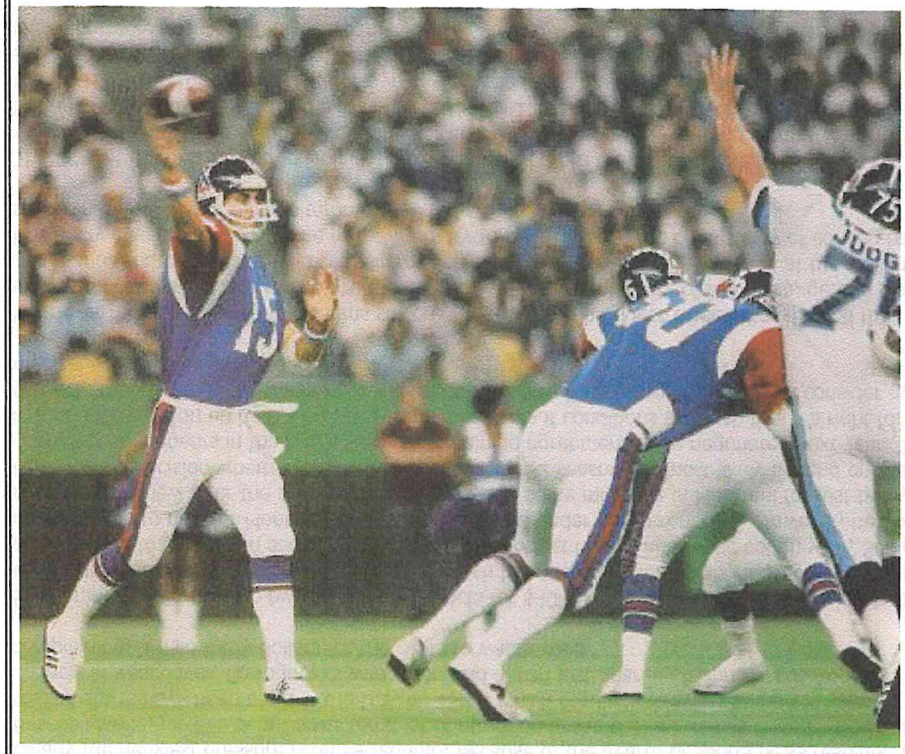
1981 - The NFL comes to the Montreal -Giving His All For the Als courtesy SportIllustrated 1981

But making it in Montreal has been tough so far for Vince Ferragamo and some of his hotshot U.S. teammates. By Jack McCallum – Sports Illustrated July 20, 1981



Vince Ferragamo the most celebrated student currently enrolled in French 202 at Montreal's John Rennie High School, has now played in two regular season *parties* for his new team, the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League. But neither was much of a party for the ex-Los Angeles Ram quarterback now hyped as "le meilleur quart du continent," the best quarterback on the continent. Ferragamo's debut on July 4 against the British Columbia Lions in Vancouver was a disaster. He completed just 13 of 30 passes for 155 yards, and had two interceptions in a 48-8 defeat. Last Friday night, in the Als' home opener against the Toronto Argonauts , he did engineer a last-minute drive that produced a 23-22 victory, but not before he had thrown three interceptions and has heard his first chorus of Canadian booing from the crowd of 35,281 at Olympic Stadium.

Ferragamo is not the only American having problems in Montreal. Since Canadian entrepreneur Nelson Skalbania bought the Alouettes on March 30, he has also lured two first-round picks from this year's NFL draft and two established NFL veterans north of the border. The two vets are both wide receivers brought in as targets for Ferragamo- Billy (Souliers Blancs) Johnson of Houston and James Scott of Chicago. The two first round choices both played at Oklahoma – Running Back David Overstreet and Defensive End Keith Gary, the top picks of the Miami Dolphins and the Pittsburgh Steelers, respectively. None of them has taken Canada by storm.

Arriving in Montreal a few days before the Toronto game, Gary failed his physical because of an irregular heartbeat. He subsequently passed a second physical, attributing his problems at the first to nervous stress. "I am a very sensitive type of person." Said Gary. Scott set a league record for "missed arrivals" before finally showing up in Montreal on the day of the opening game in Vancouver. Scott had signed a contract on April 27, the same day as Ferragamo, but he failed to show up for training camp. On several occasions he told team officials he was coming to Montreal on such and such a flight, but when they met the plane Scott wasn't on it. Nevertheless after just four days of practice, and after being booed as he was introduced before the Toronto game, Scott caught 3 passes for 37 yards, including a 27 yard touchdown pass from Ferragamo.

Overstreet has looked the best of the Americans, even though he has fumbled three times in two games. He missed training camp while his agent, Jerry Argovitz, jousted with the Dolphins who have since accused Argovitz of using Overstreet as a pawn in his dealings with other NFL owners who have drafted

his clients. Overstreet disagrees "What made me really feel like I wanted to come up here." He says, "was when my wife could see Miami wasn't being fair with me. She didn't know anything about Canada, but she thought we should come." Overstreet himself thought he should after he heard Skalbania's offer, which has been estimated as high as $250,000, though Alouette officials say that figure is inflated. Argovits has said the Als offered more money for two years than the Dolphins did for five.

Of all the Americans, Johnson probably had the most to gain in Canada. The Oilers distrusted his knees-he had minor surgery on the right one in 1978 and major surgery on the left one in '79- and they seemed committed to the two tight-end offence that made him a part-time player last season. And even if he's not making $175,000 with the Alouettes as he is said to be, he is undoubtedly getting more than he did at Houston, where his salary was about $100,000.

Clearly the heaviest pressure is on Ferragamo. Because of the dearth of sports news resulting from the Baseball strike, his CFL debut attracted a lot of attention in the U.S. as well as Canada. Both his regular-season starts have been aired in the U.S. by ESPN, which regularly televises some CFL games. After the debacle in Vancouver, Ferragamo's wife, Jodi, said "I can just hear my friends in Los Angeles complaining, 'I paid thirty dollars for the cable to watch *that*!'"

Skalbania gave Ferragamo two one year contracts for $400,000 per year but which may in fact be worth almost twice that much, in a league in which the average salary is about $40,000 and some players have to hold down second jobs. Every CFL contract has an automatic option year, So Ferragamo could choose to play for Montreal as long as four years under his current deal. However, he holds the right not to renew after the first contract has expired, so he might be in Montreal for just two years. Ferragamo's decision whether to stay or not after the '82 season will most likely depend on the rules governing free agents in the NFL collective bargaining agreement to be negotiated next year. "I feel I'm in a no lose position up here," he says. "After two years if conditions are such that it's right for me to go back, then I will. If not, I'll reap, my rewards here, live it up for four years, then consider going to medical school and being a doctor."

Whatever happens, Ferragamo seems sincere when he says he doesn't need the NFL and that a career in medicine is realistic. He took a pre-med curriculum at the University of Nebraska, getting his B.S. in 1977, and, in the semester following his rookie season with the Rams, he studied at the Creighton University Medical School. "If the NFL owners try to begrudge me the opportunity of coming back," he says, "med school is a viable alternative."

That's what the CFL started to look like for Ferragamo before the 1980 season, his fourth with the Rams. His original three-year contract paid him about $47,500 a year with an additional option year at $52,000 the best bargain in Los Angeles until $42,500 Fernando came along to pitch for the Dodgers. Ferragamo had taken over for the injured Pat Haden 12 games into the '79 season and had led the Rams to the Super Bowl, where he performed heroically in the 31-19 loss to the Steelers. But last year, after the Rams had given the starting job back to Haden and failed to offer Ferragamo a contract he found satisfactory, he decided to play out that option. From a base of $52,000 it was unlikely the Rams would get near what Skalbania was offering. Their final offer was reportedly about $300,000 a year.

In the past Ferragamo has had trouble making decisions. He once mailed a letter of intent to Stanford only to retrieve it from the post office because of family pressure to enrole at the University of California, which he later abandoned for Nebraska-but no-one could say his defection to Canada was lacking in courage. Neither Johnson, Scott or Overstreet was with the Alouettes at the time, and for all Ferragamo knew about the CFL, his wide receivers could've been Neil Young and Margaret Trudeau. "All I knew was that the rules where different." He says.

Alouette coach Joe Scanella, a former special teams coach with the Oakland Raiders, says Ferragamo's biggest adjustment is picking up the extra defensive back who is in the pass coverage because there are 12 men on a side in the CFL. With six interceptions in four exhibition and five more in two regular-season games, Ferragamo is obviously having trouble with that extra man. Also the wider field (65 yards vs. 531/3 in the NFL) puts a premium on quickness. Ferragamo is a classic drop back quarterback with little mobility, as his career rushing record with the Rams (42 yards in 21 carries) will attest. And though Ferragamo's offensive line isn't small by Canadian standards (it average's about 250 pounds), no one is pretending it can offer Ferragamo the kind of security he got from say, Doug France or Dennis Harrah of the Rams.

Ferragamo recognizes all these problems. Yes, the extra defensive back has been troublesome, but he'll work it out. Yes, the wider field seems made for roll-out quarterbacks, but don't forget rolling out cuts the field in half. Yes, the offensive line isn't like the Rams', but neither are the opposing front fours.

Off the field Ferragamo can't expect to match the fringe benefits he enjoyed in the U.S. He did both national and regional commercials, but felt he had only begun to crack the market. "A lot of people were hesitant about giving me big endorsements because my situation with the Rams all along was so up in the air," he says "I go to the Super Bowl and the next year the Rams come out and say Pat Haden will be the starting quarterback." His looks (choose one from the following list of regulars -1. matinee idol, 2. sculpted, 3. classic Italian) had gotten him offers for appearances on *Fantasy Island, Laverne & Shirley* and *B.J. and the Bear*. He turned them all down-"I had to be a little careful with my image because I'm a football player first"-but no doubt the offers would've kept coming.

Ferragamo does get attention in Canada, of course and he's handled it well. So have his teammates, particularly back-up Quarterback Gerry Dattilio, who had the most to lose from Ferragamo's arrival. A roll-out quarterback who runs well, Dattilio was the Eastern Conference's most valuable player last year, only to lose his job to Ferragamo before the first jumping jack of training camp. "I don't like the situation, though I'm taking it better now," says Dattilio. "There's no doubt that Vince, being the type of person he is—a hard worker, a good guy and all that—has made it easier." But the Ferragamos have had to make adjustments too. They'll return to their house in Irvine, Calif. After the season but for now they're living in a modest apartment complex in West Island, a predominantly English-speaking Montreal suburb. Jodi is trying to get by without a dishwasher, a garbage disposal or a double sink, deprivations which undoubtedly interest her husband less than, say , the extra-defensive-back problem. Jodi's spirits picked up last week when Vince bought her a new Trans Am, but she has yet to make sense of the dubbed version of the *Mary Tyler Moore Show*. "Ted Baxter speaking French will just blow you away," she says. But the biggest sacrifice of all? "We can't find any Mexican restaurants in the city," says Jodi. "It was our second anniversary recently and Vince asked me what I wanted> I told him to fly me back to California for some Mexican food."

The Ferragamos are making an effort to learn French. They're in different classes because Jodi studied the language in high school; she can count to 1,000, while Vince struggles to 50. "I'm not trying to become real proficient," he says, "I just want to pick up some of it to get along. Things like, *bonjour, madame* or *comment ca va?*' But it's slow going. Football takes up a lot of time and Ferragamo is a frequent class-cutter: He missed two last week while preparing for the home opener.

That preparation seemed wasted early in the game as the Alouettes, who trailed 21-1 at halftime, resembled the team that lose 48-4 in the opener. Had Skalbania not been vacationing in Greece, surely he would have been tempted to come roaring in to the dressing room at halftime. But, finally, the American cast got moving. There was Scott hauling in Ferragamo's second TD pass with 8:57 left to bring the Alouettes to within 21-15. There was Souliers Blancs picking up 17 yards on a wide-receiver screen to give Montreal a first down at the Toronto one with only 19 seconds left. And there was Overstreet leaping over the goal line on the next play to tie the game at 22-22 and set up Gerry McGrath's winning placement. It was exciting enough to make Ferragamo (18 of 38 for 240 yards and two TDs) shout, "Au revoir, NFL, au revoir!" One wonders, though if the NFL hasn't already said, "Au Revoir, Vince Ferragamo, au revoir!"

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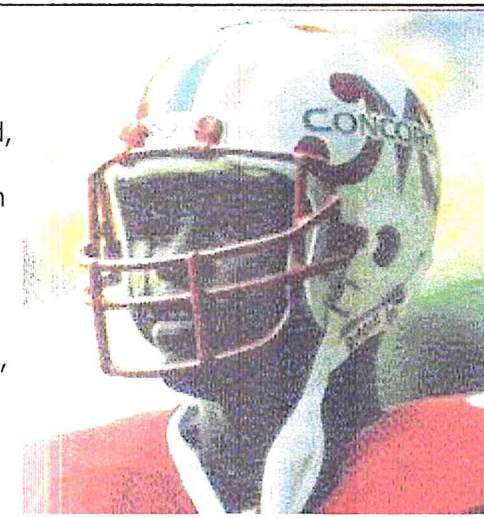
Turner Gill - Montreal Concordes - 1983-85 -



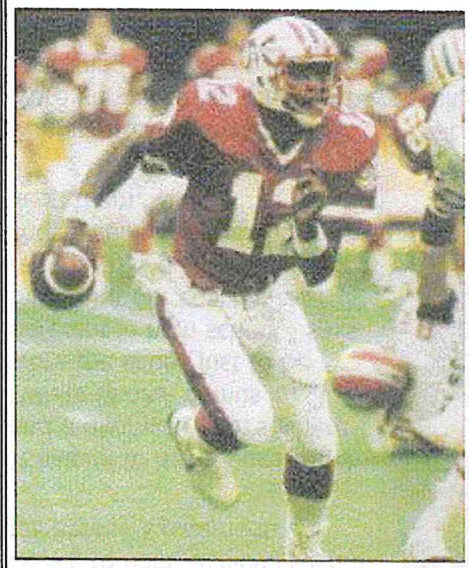
Nebraska's starting signal caller from 1981 through 1983, Gill led the Huskers to a 28-2 mark, including a 20-0 league record, and three conference titles.
A three-time All-Big Eight pick and a second-team All-American as a senior, Gill was the key to the Huskers' high-octane offense in 1983, a season in which NU I-back Mike Rozier won the Heisman Trophy and Gill finished fourth in the voting for collegiate football's top award. The 1983 team finished 12-1 and second in the final polls. In his four-year career (1980-83), Gill completed 231 of 428 passes for 3,317 yards, 34 touchdowns and a .540 completion percentage and rushed for 1,317 yards and 18 TDs. He is sixth on NU's all-time total offense chart with 4,634 yards.
A talented all-around athlete, Gill spent two seasons with the Canadian Football League's Montreal Concordes (1984-85)

Year	Att	Cmp	Yds	Avg.	TD	Int	Lg
1984	375	199	2,673	53.1	16	17	77
1985	352	212	2,255	60.2	7	15	57

In February 2005 Gill was named director of player development with the Green Bay Packers. The Packers have had their eyes on Gill for some time, largely due to his relationship with Green Bay offensive coordinator Tom Rossley. Rossley and Gill first crossed paths when Gill quarterbacked the Canadian Football League's Montreal Concordes in the mid-1980s and Rossley was an offensive assistant there. When Rossley became the head coach at Southern Methodist in 1991, he hired Gill as wide receivers coach. Gill returned to Nebraska the next year, but stayed in touch with Rossley and was contacted on two occasions about assistant coaching opportunities on Sherman's staff. One was for a running backs coach and another was to coach the wide receivers. But Gill turned down both jobs to stay at Nebraska.

"My goal is to be a head football coach at some time," Gill said. "It may happen and it may not. But this is another avenue to give me more experience in a different environment and a different brand of football as far as the NFL and the speed of the game, a little more techniques and more time with football. I get an opportunity to learn a lot." Gill was one of the most successful quarterbacks in Nebraska history, going 28-2 in his three seasons as a starter and leading the Cornhuskers to the

national championship game in 1983, where they lost to Miami. Gill was a Heisman Trophy finalist in 1983, when he led an offense that averaged 546.7 yards and 52 points per game. But he lost out to teammate Mike Rozier for the Heisman that season.



Gill played two seasons with Montreal in the CFL and led the Concordes to back-to-back playoff appearances. He also played minor league baseball from 1986-'88 in the Cleveland and Detroit farm systems.

Gill returned to Nebraska as a graduate assistant in 1990, then served as the quarterbacks coach from 1992 to 2002 and had the title of assistant head coach added in 2003. Nebraska fired head coach Frank Solich after the 2003 season, and Gill was retained by Bill Callahan as receivers coach.\

In his time at Nebraska, the Cornhuskers won three national championships and Gill worked with some of the better quarterbacks in school history. Gill tutored first-team All-American and Heisman runner-up Tommie Frazier, who led the Huskers to national titles in 1994 and '95. He also coached Eric Crouch, who won the Heisman and earned first-team All-America honors in 2001. In between, Gill worked with Scott Frost, who guided Nebraska to the 1997 national championship. Both Crouch and Frost later spent time with the Packers.

Gill left Nebraska two months ago to find a head coaching job, but was bypassed for openings at New Mexico State and Sam Houston State.
"I'm still going to have Nebraska in my blood," Gill said. "It's still there, and it always will be."

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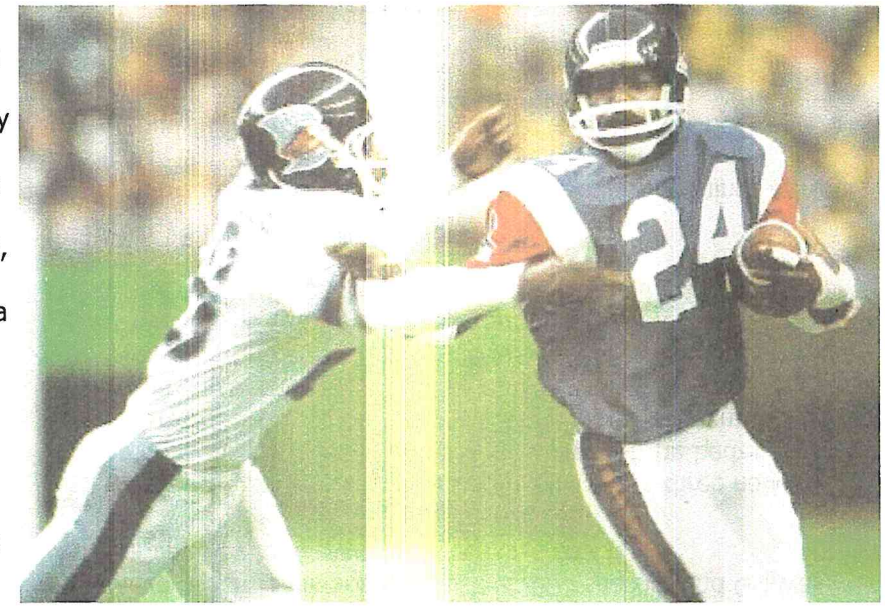
Billy "White Shoes" Johnson - Montreal Alouettes 1981



Career: One of only two Oilers to make the NFL's 75th Anniversary All-Time Team (Ken Houston, the other), Billy Johnson knew how to draw attention. How did a tiny man (5' 9") from a tiny school (Division III Widener College), a lowly 15th-round draft choice to boot, achieve such a tall honor? Excitement.

It helped to have a nickname and a gimmick. That's where "White Shoes" comes in. "I wore the shoes just to be different in high school," says Billy. "But our coach was a real no-frills guy. He saw the shoes, called me over and asked me what was up. I told him the shoes made me run faster. So I got to keep them."

Running fast is what Johnson did best but the big colleges weren't interested in some little guy who wore glasses, even if he did have white shoes. At Widener, Billy was better than the competition, averaging over 250 all-purpose yards per game. He was eventually voted to the College Football Hall Of Fame.

Billy was picked by the Oilers in 1974 over the initial objections of GM/Head Coach Sid Gillman who didn't want a "midget" on his team. Johnson made the squad as a kick returner but also managed to work his way into the offense, catching two touchdown passes. That's when he began another

attention-getting practice -- a celebration dance. "It just happened," smiles Johnson about his first NFL touchdown boogie. "It was spontaneous."

The dance began with the knees flying in opposite directions then flying back together as if they would knock. The ball might be held aloft or he might start moving it under his legs or behind his back. In later years, White Shoes added new moves such as a fake toss into the stands and the splits. Teammates learned not to rush to congratulate him after he scored but to wait until his performance was over.

Getting into the end zone was part of the fun. Johnson would often do this with turn-on-a-dime, water bug moves that left defenders waving at air. He would reverse field or lose yardage to get that big return, a tactic most coaches would disapprove of -- but not Bum Phillips. "Billy is an equal-opportunity runner," quipped Phillips. "He gives everyone an equal chance to tackle him."

1975 was Johnson's breakout season, tying an NFL mark with four kick returns for touchdowns (three by punt, one by kickoff) and snared 37 passes, one for a score. Billy caught 4 TD passes the next year, keeping defenses from doubling Ken Burrough. In 1977, White Shoes was everywhere - scoring three times on kicks and three more on pass plays. He made the Pro Bowl for the second time.

Injuries stole much of the 1978 and 1979 seasons. He was well enough in 1980 to grab two touchdown passes but, by now, Philips had found other kick returners and the aging Oilers were on the verge of rebuilding. Unsigned, Johnson spent a year in the Canadian Football League with the Montreal Alouettes before retiring with the Falcons.

Johnson holds both the Oilers' record for punt return yardage and is currently third all-time behind Dave Meggett and Brian Mitchell. He currently works with the Atlanta Falcons in community outreach.

Houston Highlight: The 1976 Pro Bowl, held in New Orleans, was Johnson's first appearance on a national stage. Billy grabbed a punt from Detroit's Herman Weaver, moved down the right sideline, dodged two defenders and sailed to a 90-yard touchdown. His return, and the 159 total return yards, are still Pro Bowl records. He was named the Pro Bowl MVP even though his AFC team lost, 23-20.

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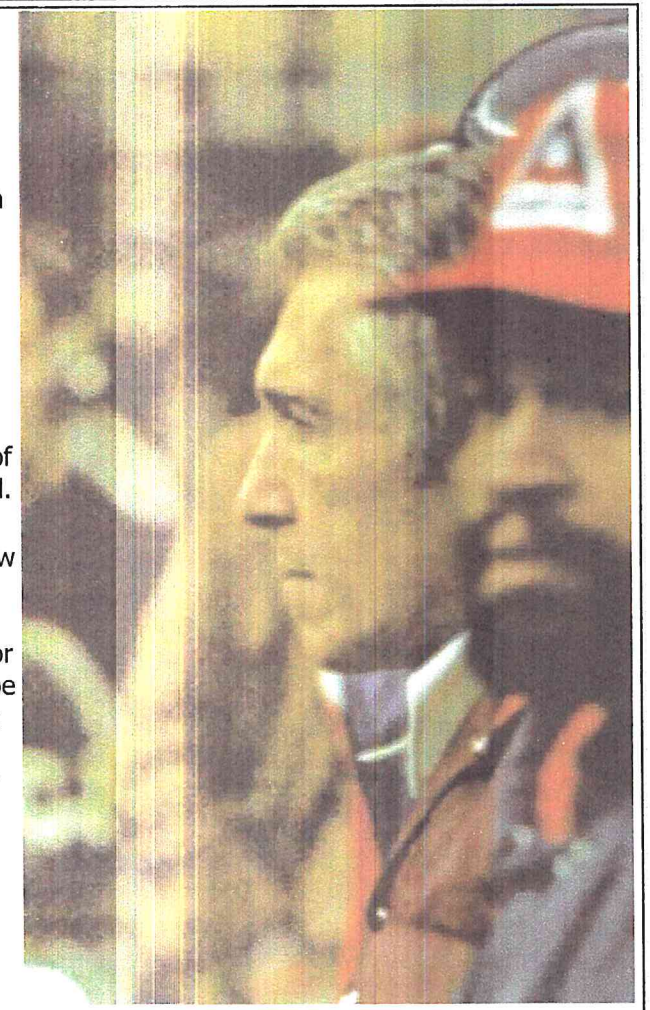
Marv Levy - Levy honed his craft on Alouettes' sideline Coach led Larks to 1974, '77 Grey Cup titles before guiding NFL's Bills to four straight Bowls - Ian MacDonald - Freelance



Marv Levy credits his CFL coaching experience as a key to his being inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame at Canton, Ohio, three years ago. Sure, leading the Buffalo Bills to a record four straight Super Bowls (all losses) from 1991-94 while riding a shotgun offence led by quarterback Jim Kelly, running-back Thurman Thomas and wide-receiver Andre Reed was a factor in Levy's induction as a coach. But the five years he spent as head coach of the Alouettes from 1973-77 were important as well.

"Absolutely," Levy, 79, said in a telephone interview this week from the West Virginia home he and his wife Fran are in the process of selling. The couple also maintains a home in Chicago, as Levy waits for his beloved Cubs to win a World Series. Levy will be back in Montreal this evening to address a Quebec Junior Football League banquet at the Queen Elizabeth Hotel. Levy led the Alouettes to the Grey Cup game in 1974, '75 and '77, winning in '74 and '77. He posted a 50-34-4 record with the Als - the best of any CFL coach over that period - which helped open the head-coaching door to the NFL.

After a solid head-coaching career at the U.S. collegiate level, Levy managed to land assistant jobs in the NFL with the Philadelphia Eagles and Los Angeles Rams, before joining head coach George Allen's staff with the Washington Redskins. His responsibilities under Allen were special teams and the

kicking game, and Levy became recognized as one of the best in those fields.

"I was in charge of special teams and I think I did a decent job," Levy said. "But there's that big step from being an assistant to the head man.
"Many times, someone proves they are a good co-ordinator or a specialist coach and remains assigned to those aspects of the game. They never get the head coaching chance.
"I had had success as a college head coach, but that's not always enough."
Alouettes general manager J.I. Albrecht approached Levy about leaving Washington after the 1972 NFL season and becoming a head coach in Montreal.
"I left a very fine job as an assistant with a team that had just gone to the Super Bowl with a great head coach," Levy said. "I was given the opportunity to be head coach again, this time with professionals. It proved I could be a head coach, and that's why subsequent opportunities came my way.
"I feel strongly about that. Of course, it helped that we won in Montreal, as well."
Levy refers to his time in Montreal as a "tremendously memorable five years." He also said he became a better coach during that period.
"Whatever level you are at in football, the same things win," he said. "You throw, you run, you tackle, you block.
"But coming to Canada, there were things for me to learn. There are nuances, differences in the Canadian game. So I was in the position where it was to my benefit to listen to players - especially veteran Canadians - who gave me insights on the Canadian game.
"I listened and incorporated things into our game plan. I learned that you can learn from players."
Levy left the Alouettes after the team's 41-6 rout of the Edmonton Eskimos in the 1977 Grey Cup game at Olympic Stadium, before what is still a Grey Cup record crowd of 68,318, to become head coach of the NFL's Kansas City Chiefs.

He spent five years with the Chiefs before being fired. He joined the Bills in 1986 and stayed in Buffalo through 1997, being named the NFL's coach of the year in 1988 and 1995.
In the years since leaving the coaching business, Levy has held various TV jobs as an NFL commentator and last season worked on a pregame radio show and postgame television show in Chicago. He also wrote regular reports for NFL.com.
"I think I'll be doing that again, and there is talk of other things as well," said Levy, who also is often asked to give motivational speeches.

Levy also wrote a book titled Where Else Would You Rather Be?, which was published late last year and within months was on the New York Times best-seller list. Three chapters are devoted to his time with the Alouettes. Among other things, Levy said that if former Alouettes tight-end Peter Dalla Riva, a CFL Hall of Famer, "had so desired, he had the ability to play in the NFL."
Levy spent a year and a half penning his memories from 47 years of coaching for the book and is proud there is no ghost writer. The Harvard English history graduate has put together a riveting and

	entertaining description of the highs and lows involved in his chosen line of work. And Levy feels he could still coach. "If an NFL head-coaching job was there, I'd like to try," said Levy, who will be 80 in August. "I think I can do the job. "I won't wither up and cry myself to sleep if nobody calls," he added. Levy stays in shape with regular three-mile walks and also does light weight exercises.

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Lawrence Phillips

		Rushing					Receiving				
Year		ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	LG	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	LG
1991	Montreal	187	1022	5.5	13	51	33	292	8.8	0	30
1992	Calgary	107	486	4.5	1	28	13	92	7.1	0	25

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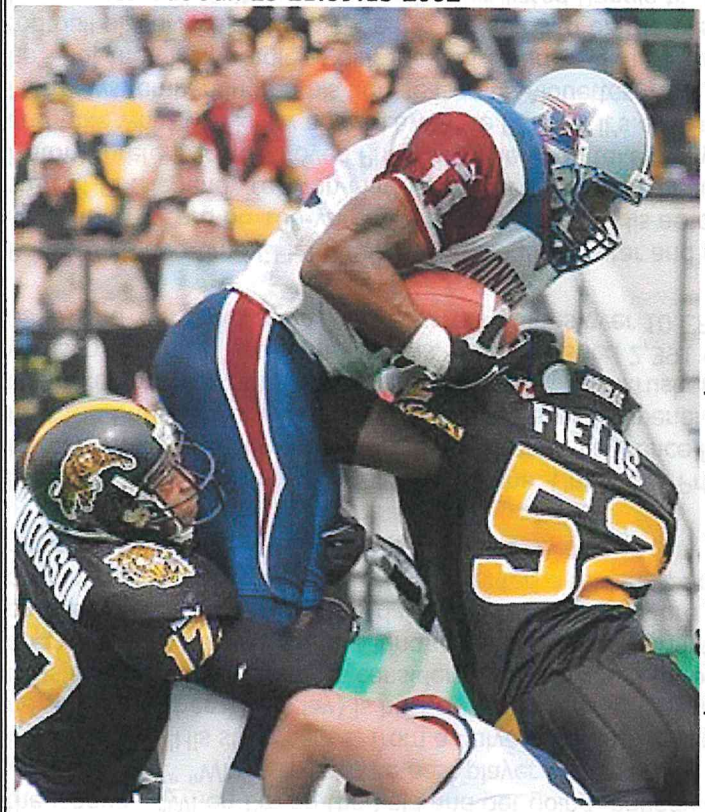

CBC SPORTS ONLINE - Phillips, 27, agreed to contract terms with Montreal on May 28. He rushed 424 times for 1,453 yards and 14 touchdowns in 35 games, including 20 starts, for the St. Louis Rams, Miami Dolphins and San Francisco 49ers over four NFL seasons. Yet his off-field conduct left much to be desired. Phillips pleaded no contest to domestic violence while starring for the Nebraska Cornhuskers. Drafted sixth overall by the Rams in 1996, the Little Rock, Ark. native was let go 19 months later for insubordination. Phillips was arrested three times and jailed 23 days for violating probation of his drunk driving conviction. Later in 1997, he signed with the Dolphins, yet was released after pleading no contest to striking a woman in a nightclub. Phillips bounced to the Barcelona Dragons of NFL Europe and, in 1999, earned top offensive players honours with 1,021 yards rushing and 14 TDs. Phillips joined the Niners that autumn, but wound up cut for skipping practice. He has not played professional outdoor football since. "I'm looking forward to it," Phillips said following Monday practice. "I just want to play. I feel I'm a good player and I want to show it."

Phillips boldly proclaimed himself "the best player in

the league." "When I'm on the field and get going, nobody can stop me," he continued. "It doesn't matter who we're playing." "Whether he's the best player in the league depends on a lot of things," Lions head coach Steve Buratto said. "His statement is from a naive individual because he hasn't played a game in this league yet. "But if he says that, then (Tuesday) is his first step to being that good. But it's words and nothing counts except shoulder pads and helmets." Phillips is considered a malcontent in football circles, as he showed by jilting the Alouettes just one week into training camp. Citing unfair treatment by Matthews and general manager Jim Popp, he walked out on the team only to return five days later. "Those guys are full of crap, so I left," Phillips said at the time. "I couldn't get a straight answer. "I just wanted a fair shot, no special treatment. There was an underhandedness going on."

Mike Pringle has taken a back seat to no one. Until now. Pringle, one of the preeminent running backs in CFL history, will watch from the bench as newcomer Lawrence Phillips starts at tailback when the Montreal Alouettes host the British Columbia Lions in Tuesday's season opener for both clubs at Percival Molson Stadium. Pringle, 34, is a perennial workhorse and one of the most prolific rushers ever, averaging in excess of 300 carries and 1,600 yards in six of the last eight seasons. He has rushed 2,391 times for 13,680 yards, including a record 2065 yards in 1998, and 104 touchdowns in 145 career games over 10 CFL seasons.

Pringle is a two-time CFL MVP, six-time league all-star and eight-time division all-star with a record 66 100-yard games to his credit. His accomplishments are the stuff of CFL legend. Yet Don Matthews, the winningest head coach in league history, prefers the unproven Phillips. "When you take away his legendary status and take what you know about Lawrence Phillips, it's easier to decide," said Matthews, embarking on his first season as Alouettes head coach. "It's not that he's not the Mike Pringle of old. It's that Lawrence Phillips is an exceptionally gifted football player."I also believe he has a chance to be the best tailback the league has ever seen." Matthews reportedly humiliated Pringle by deeming him the designated import, who can only replace an import player leaving the game for good.

It is a role normally reserved for kickers, not to mention a bitter pill for Pringle to swallow. "I'm not going to be a distraction on this team," said Pringle, who is 2,437 yards shy of George Reed's career rushing record. "I have a lot of respect for the guys in this locker room and for me to make a spectacle of this and take the focus away from our goal would be irresponsible. I'll be as professional as I can and, when I do get out on the field, I'll do what Mike Pringle does." "It surprised everybody, but we knew something was going to happen," added Alouettes linebacker Stefan Reid. "They didn't bring in Lawrence to sit on the bench and he's a fantastic football player and probably deserves a chance to play, so there's no rift. "I think everybody's focused on playing football."

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Johnny Rodgers - "The Ordinary Superstar" - 1973-76 - Nebraska

Excerpt: HuddlingUp by Jeffrey Goodman,pg157-160,printed 1981FitzhenryWhitesideLtd.

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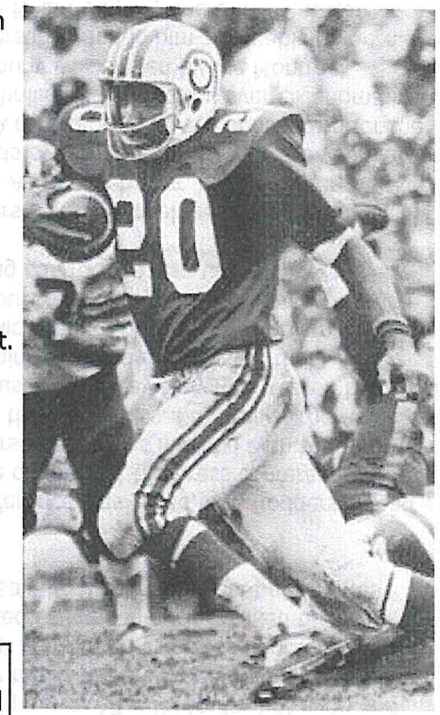

The Alouettes had had the flashy receiver and runner on their negotiation list two years before he became eligible for the NFL's annual draft of college players. His exceptional talent was already well-known in both Canada and the United States.

Rodgers won the Heisman trophy, and was the first draft choice of the San Diego Chargers. All the publicity the player received put added pressure on the Alouettes because they now knew it wouldn't be easy to lure him to Canada. The one thing in the CFL clubs favour was that Harland Svare and Ron Mix, the two men who would be responsible for enticing the player to San Diego would underestimate the competition they were about to get from the Alouettes and the formidable J.I.Albrecht. The Chargers did know the Alouettes were interested in Rogers because his agent, Mike Trope of California, who had signed Rodgers as his first client didn't make it any secret.
That put more pressure on the Canadian team.

After Rodgers played in the Orange Bowl game, in which he was a standout against Notre Dame, he had to serve a thirty-day jail sentence, because he had been convicted of driving with a suspended licence and running a stop sign. Albrecht called the player every day he was in jail in Nebraska to remind him that the Alouettes wanted to sign him and that they wanted him to visit Montreal.

	Rushing				Receiving			
Year	Att	Yds	Avg	TD	Att	Yds	Avg.	Td
1973	55	303	5.5	0	41	841	20.5	7
1974		n/a			60	1024	17.1	7
1975		n/a				n/a		
1976	20	50	2.5	1		n/a		

The problem wouldn't be selling Montreal, the Alouettes figured. It was how much it would take to get him to sign. Owner Sam Berger was hesitant at first, but Albrecht and coach Marv Levy coaxed him along slowly. Rodger was electrifying on a football field and would attract a lot of fans, Levy said. On his release, Rodgers went to San Diego, and took part in the teams mini rookie camp. The Chargers let it be known that he was within their grasp. They took pictures of him in a team uniform and circulated them to the press. But they hadn't signed him, and when it came down to discussing dollars they told him that although he was a first round draft choice (25th overall) he still had to prove himself as a

professional.

Rodgers made his reservations for the trip to Montreal. His agent, Mike Trope, flew in first and figures were tossed around. Later in the day Rodgers arrived. He was introduced to Albrecht and then Levy. The Montreal head coach proceeded to explain how he fitted into team plans. There was no talk of proving himself. The Alsouettes' offence was going to be built around Johnny Rodgers.
Als set Rodgers up in a suite at a hotel and never let him out of their sight, They drove home how much he was going to mean to the club, that he would be able to do the same things in Montreal – be a receiver, runner and punt returner – that he had done at Nebraska, and that Montreal was a star-struck city. He would love the fans, he was told and the fans would love him, Rodgers had a big ego and it was being fed at every turn. Rodger saw plenty of proof that he would be a big man in Montreal. He made the headlines in all the French and English newspapers, he was in demand for television appearances. He was big, big news. After three days of hype and hooplah, Rodgers wanted to go home and think things over. On their way to the airport Trope mentioned that another client of his, quarterback Jimmy Jones, was available and Albrecht put him on the clubs negotiation list too. Before he left, Rodgers told Albrecht how much he liked Montreal, liked Levy how much he liked the grandfatherly cigar-smoking Berger. In fact he liked everything. Albrecht said he would appreciate getting his decision within a week. Rodgers said that would not be a problem.

Shortly afterwards, Rodgers and Trope returned to Montreal, a press conference was called, and Rodgers signed the most lucrative contract ever awarded in the CFL. Rodgers did sign the contract at the press conference; three years at about $100,000 each plus $100,000 signing bonus. When Rodgers said he was insulted with the offer the Chargers had made, Berger took that to mean that he could have offered the player less. But in fact, the Alouettes got him because of the no-cut clause, the larger signing bonus, and because of the way they had treated him. And so, the Alouettes had landed the "Ordinary Superstar" as Rodgers called himself. He demonstrated that flamboyant style by wearing, to his contract signing, the rabbit-fur hat which was to become his emblem. Albrecht was vindicated and Berger got what he paid for, almost. Rodgers was about to fill every CFL Stadium with fans – except the Autostade. A year later he demanded that his precedent-setting contract be torn up, and it was.
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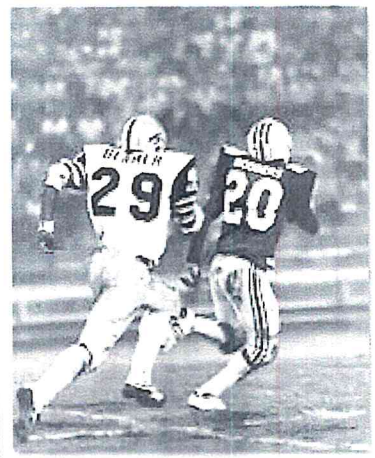

Leading the nation's #1 team, Rodgers proved himself as one of the most versatile backs in Cornhusker history. As punt returner, pass reciever, blocker and runner, he broke offensive records by the dozens. In his three-year career he racked up 5586 yards for an NCAA record. His 72-yard punt return for the first touchdown ignited the Huskers thrilling 35-31 victory over Oklahoma in the Game of the Century in 1971. Johnny was signed by the Montreal Alouettes where his quickness and versatility made him a valuable favorite. He had a career with the Chargers in the NFL. Rodgers, one of the nattiest dressers in football, has been a conspicuous at recent Heisman Dinners.
The San Diego Chargers selected Rodgers in the first round of the 1973 draft, but he rebuffed the NFL to join the Montreal Alouettes of the Canadian Football League.
"I had always dreamed of having $100,000, and San Diego didn't offer me anything close to that," he said. "So I went to Montreal, and they offered me what I was looking for right out of the gate."
Rodgers played four seasons in the CFL, winning Rookie of the Year, Most Valuable Player and All-Pro honors, along with a Grey Cup. He had the

	personal glory but still longed to prove himself in the United States. In 1977, the 5-foot-10, 180-pounder got into tip-top condition and finally became a Charger. "I did all I could do in the CFL," he said. "So I came back to try because I wanted to see just how good I could be." Unfortunately, the NFL did not work out for Rodgers. He pulled both hamstrings in the first year and saw limited action. The next year, he suffered a horrendous knee injury when a teammate stepped on his foot during practice. The injury put an end to his football career. Only after several years of operations and rehabilitation did the knee return to normal. Most outstanding rookie 1973. Described by one coach as a "super superstar", 23 year-old Rogers demurred: "I just want to be an average superstar."

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Sonny Wade - Quarterback/Punter - 1969-78 - Emory & Henry

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Sonny Wade was a 1968 All-American out of Emory and Henry College a power-house football power based in Virginia. When he joined the Alouettes in 1970 the team had sustained 9 straight losing seasons, legendary quarterback Sam Etchevarry returned to the team as Head Coach. Along with a new general manager in Red O'Quinn the attitude of the team instantly changed.

Etchevarry named Jesse "Sonny" Wade as the clubs starter and he led the team to a 7-6-1 record. The Alouettes defeated Toronto 17-6 in the Eastern semi-final. Then over a two game total Montreal defeated Hamilton first 32-22 and then 11-4. The Alouettes then faced Calgary who had finished 9-7 in the Grey Cup.

excerpt CFL legends Sam Etchevarry - cfl.ca

The memorable play was an alert improvisation by Montreal half-back Moses Denson. Down 7-0, the Als gambled on 3rd and one, deep in Calgary territory. Montreal pitched to Denson and he became trapped in the backfield.

Montreal linebacker Mark Kosmos explained, "The pitch went to Moses and we thought he was going to take it in. All of a sudden he was trapped in the backfield. Somebody had him by the leg, but it was such a sloppy field the guy couldn't get up. Moses cocked his arm and threw it. Ted (Alfin)'s back there and it's the biggest play of the game. Today he'd be ruled in the grasp, and the play would be whistled dead."

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1969	Mont	348	164	2719	47.1	12	30
1970	Mont	322	170	2411	52.8	14	31
1971	Mont	338	155	2090	45.9	8	27
1972	Mont	219	118	1537	45.8	9	26
1976	Mont	382	205	2504	53.7	17	27
1977	Mont	136	91	1210	66.9	9	5

Following an exchange of field goals, Montreal scored following a Calgary interception and then on a pass play from Wade to Gary Lefevbre. The quenching final score was 23-10.
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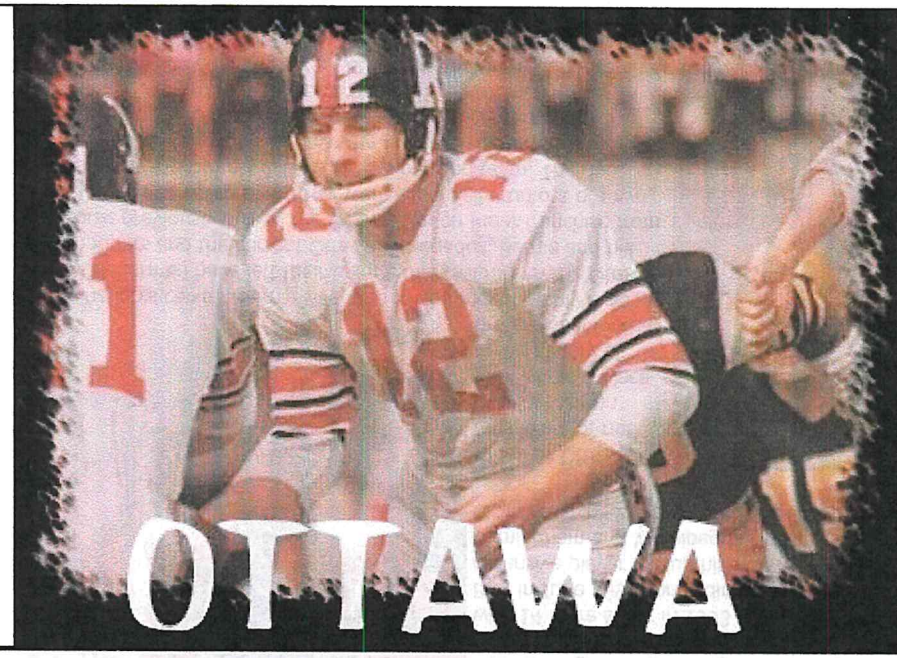
Both O'Quinn and Etcheverry would leave in 1972 after 6-8 and 4-10 seasons. Marv Levy joined the club as head coach in 1974 and the club returned to the Grey Cup. After a first place finish in the East and 9-5-2 record Montreal would defeat Ottawa 14-4 in the Eastern final to face the Edmonton Eskimos. Wade led Montreal again to victory 20-7 over Edmonton and captured his second Most Outstanding Player award. Often under appreciated by Montreal fans and across the league CJAD announcer and voice of the Alouettes in the 1970's Marc Charlebois summed up the overriding feeling of Wade.

"He is the only quarterback in the Canadian Football League who is put together with crazy glue because he keeps coming apart. He has had a lot of

	hard luck with injuries. He is perhaps the most criticized quarterback in Canada and he is just a super courageous guy, he has demonstrated that and he has the ability too- he has won a couple of Grey Cups." Charlebois said in 1977 for YARDS magazine. Wade would have another outstanding Grey Cup performance in 1977. In the famed staples bowl the Montreal Alouettes overcame a slick forzen surface at Olympic Stadium with the aid of staples to defeat Edmonton 41-6. Wade was amazing completing 22 of 40 attempts for 340 yards as he was named the games Most Outstanding Player for a record 3rd time. No one can argue that Sonny was a big game performer. The face of victories for the team in the 1970's he retired after the 1978 season.



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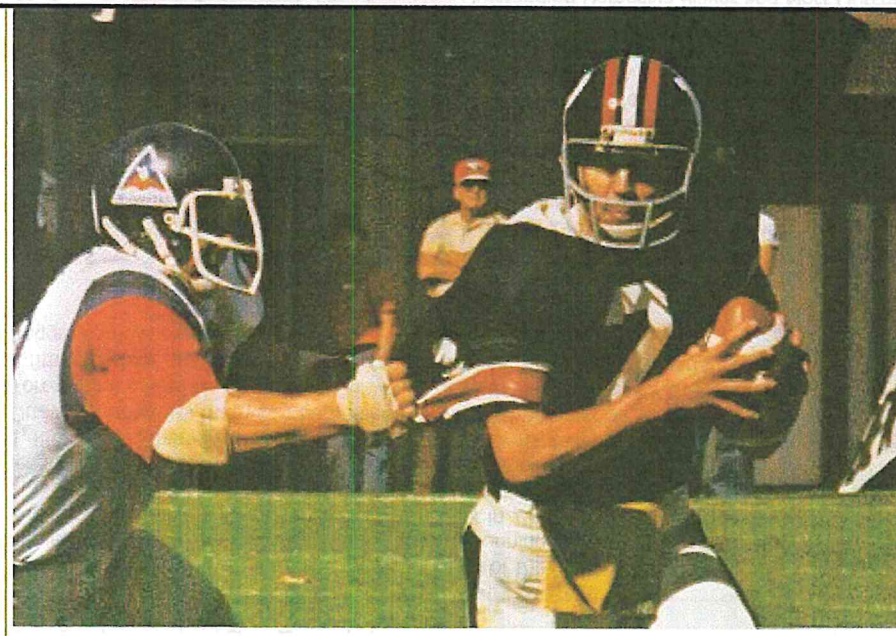
1970'S
1980'S
1990'S



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Tom Clements spent his first 4 seasons in the CFL with Ottawa. Recruited from Notre Dame where he played under the legendary Ara Parsegian Clements made an immediate impact with Ottawa as their starting quarterback in 1975 capturing the leagues outstanding rookie award. Clements topped those exploits in his second year with Ottawa leading the team to a Grey Cup championship over Saskatchewan in a classic Grey Cup. He left Ottawa after

After a successful relief appearance in the 1988 Grey Cup with Edmonton Damon Allen signed with the Ottawa Roughriders to rejuvenate the franchise. Allen's tenure in Ottawa was tumultuous. While he posted arguably the greatest statistical seasons of his career Allen's stay was not without it's controversy. Read more here...

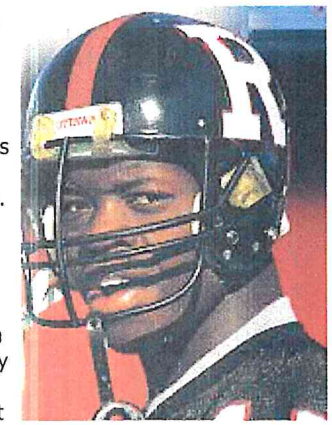
The most recognizable Ottawa Rough Rider of all

Grey Cup

Index

the 1978 season but fans will always remember his last second touchdown pass to Tony Gabriel that clinched the '76 Grey Cup. Read more about Tom Clements here...

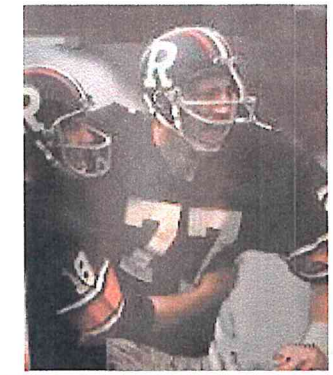
There were not many star players in the last years of the Ottawa Rough Riders but one name who did hold a special place with fans was running back Reggie Barnes. The Pennsylvania native joined Ottawa as a free agent in 1990 and proceeded to rush for 1,260 yards and 5 touchdowns on his way to being named Outstanding Rookie in the league that year. Barnes proved his rookie season was no fluke posting an incredible 1,486 yards rushing in 1991 and 10 rushing touchdowns it would be his finest season as Ottawa finished 9-9 that year. Barnes also played with Shreveport, Hamilton and Toronto but ended his career in 1996 with Ottawa the last season for the Rough Riders. A fitting end for one of the last crowd favourites as a Rough Rider. Read more about Reggie Barnes here...



Angelo Snipes joined the Ottawa Rough Riders in 1991 from the NFL Kansas City Chiefs. The 6'1" 235 lb stalwart from West Georgia Collegiate brought instant credibility to the Ottawa defense. in his first season he managed 5 quarterback sacks, adjusting to the Canadian style of play. In 1992 Snipes was an absolute force; destroying opposing quarterbacks to the tune of 20 quarterback sacks. Under the attacking defense of Co-ordinator Dave Ritchie, Snipes was dominant and the club had their best season in 13 years for a 9-9 record. Snipes was named the East divisions Most Outstanding Defensive Player and Most Outstanding Player. He finished runner-up for league honours. Snipes followed up his outstanding season with 14 more sacks in 1993 his last season in Ottawa. He was traded to B.C. in June 1994 concluding the most prolific two seasons for an Ottawa defensive player in club history. He enjoyed further success with Birmingham and Winnipeg but his greatest success was in the Nation's capital dominating the Defensive Line for the Ottawa Rough Riders.

Whether Ottawa fans like it or not the Glieberman family hold a place in the history of professional football in the nation's capital. Bernie Glieberman and most notably his son Lonie Glieberman have left their unique mark with both the Ottawa Rough Riders and the current Ottawa Renegades. Bernie and his son Lonie previously owned the Ottawa Rough Rider franchise from 1992 to 1993 at which point they were essentially run out of town and to Shreveport to establish a U.S. expansion team. The duo returned as white knights to save the financially strapped Renegades prior to the 2005 CFL season and after a dubious season in '05 their time in Ottawa has come to an end with disastrous results again. From a CBC Online feature read more about the family and their link to football in Ottawa here...

time is Russ Jackson. In addition Jackson is the most successful Canadian born player in league history. Jackson graduated from McMaster in 1958 and spent his entire 11 year career with the Rough Riders capturing 3 Grey Cup titles and leaving the field of play as a champion leading Ottawa to the 1969 Grey Cup. Read more about Russ here...



Tony Gabriel was the face of the Ottawa Rough Riders in the 1970's. A four time Most Outstanding Canadian and 1978 Most Outstanding Player Gabriel joined Ottawa from Hamilton in 1975. The Syracuse product was a dominant force in the tight end era of the Canadian Football League. The Burlington native was at the centre of the most defining moment in Ottawa Rough Rider history; simply "The Catch". Read more about the incredible Tony Gabriel here...

Art Schlichter was drafted 4th overall by the Baltimore Colts in 1982. Schlichter was a star collegiate quarterback at Ohio State and was in

the top 10 in Heisman voting three seasons. Art had a serious gambling problem and was suspended by the NFL for the 1983 season, he resurfaced in 1984 but by 1986 was out of the NFL for good. He came to Ottawa in 1988 with a 6 figure contract and a $10k signing bonus but it would be a short season, after just a half season Art was out of the Canadian league. An incredible talent with a tragic addiction, Art is another in a long list of big name talent who did not pan out in the CFL. Read more about Art here...

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Damon Allen - Ottawa 1989-91

Damon Allen Returns to Ottawa - Canadian Press 8/30/2002

OTTAWA (CP) - Damon Allen expects to be taunted. He expects catcalls and chants of ``Hobarrrt,'' when he makes his return to Frank Clair Stadium when his B.C. Lions take on the expansion Ottawa Renegades.

There are many CFL players having homecomings of sorts here this year, but few can match the trials that Allen underwent guiding the now-defunct Rough Riders between 1989 and `91. Allen, now 39, doesn't begrudge the fans who nitpicked every interception and every incompletion with loud calls for backup Ken Hobart. The scrutiny is just as harsh in Vancouver, where he has never been hailed as the franchise's saviour.

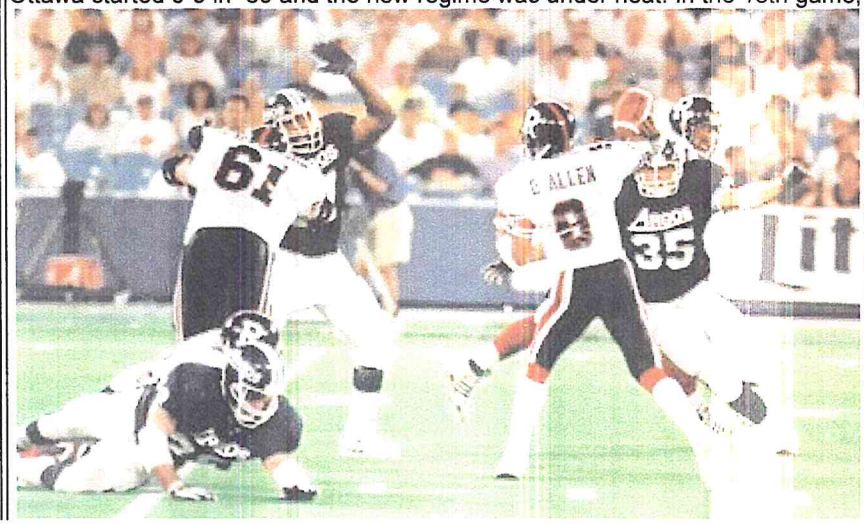
`It wouldn't be the same if I came into this stadium and the Southsiders (Rough Riders fans) weren't saying anything,'' Allen said. ``And, if they don't say (Hobart) tomorrow, I'll know something is wrong with them.''

B.C. (4-5) has won three straight, including a thriller last week against Montreal. It was the Alouettes' first loss this year and featured sensational performances from Lions quarterback Damon Allen and CFL offensive player-of-the-week Alfred Jackson, a receiver. Ottawa (2-7-0-1) needs a win to stay in playoff contention.

The Riders signed Allen as a free agent two days after the 1988 season ended. His image was slapped on a poster with those of kicker Dean Dorsey and running back Orville Lee in a marketing campaign, ``Rider Rage,'' designed by then general manager Jo-Anne Polak. Ottawa had suffered five consecutive losing seasons and a revolving door at quarterback provided little optimism. Then Allen arrived with new head coach Steve Goldman.

Allen had come off the bench to lead the Edmonton Eskimos to a comeback victory against the Toronto Argonauts in the 1987 Grey Cup. He was, effectively, a starter who had the misfortune of playing behind Matt Dunigan for three seasons and Tracy Ham for one.

Ottawa started 0-9 in `89 and the new regime was under heat. In the 13th game, Allen tore ligaments in his thumb, but he asked to be put back into the game late after his backup, Willie Gillus, was also injured. With no other quarterback on the sidelines, defensive back Steve Howlett, now a Renegades assistant, had been forced in at quarterback.



Polak, who was being taunted in the press box while Howlett took the snaps from centre, said the incident was humiliating until Allen stepped up, risking his career to save face for the franchise.

``It was the lowest point of the three years I was there, from a football standpoint,'' Polak said Thursday. ``And, because of that, I'll always be a huge Damon Allen fan.''

With two games remaining in the

season, Hobart, coming off a three-year sabbatical, was under centre for an injured Allen.
Hobart netted as many victories - two - as Allen had, and he wasn't being paid $180,000. The season finale, a win over Winnipeg, capped a 4-14 season and gave birth to the fans' love affair with Hobart (pictured left). Goldman didn't want Hobart back in 1990, but fan and media opinion prevailed.
``He told me he brought me in only for the two games, but that the media was on his back," Hobart said from his home in Idaho.
Allen was again the starter, but Hobart would often begin to warm up on the sidelines behind the bench - without Goldman's permission. Polak and Allen say it was to intentionally rile up the Southsiders, but Hobart claims he was just trying to ``stay loose." Either way, chants of ``Hobarrrt" would rain down every time.
``I didn't do anything to egg the fans on. They were just hungry to win," Hobart said. ``Goldman would always glare at me every time it happened. It was pretty uncomfortable."
With Allen injured for a game at Calgary, Hobart played and Allen could be seen on the sidelines, relishing his backup's struggles. Polak was furious and confronted Allen after the game. That's when he told her about Hobart's sideline antics.
``I was pretty pissed off and then I started hearing the real side of the story," Polak said. ``I remember Damon being stabbed in the back by Ken Hobart."
In 1991, Allen rushed for a career-high 1,036 yards and threw a career-worst 31 interceptions. He left the Riders for Hamilton following the season after leading Ottawa to two playoff appearances (both losses) in three years.

Read more about Damon Allen as an Edmonton Eskimo here...

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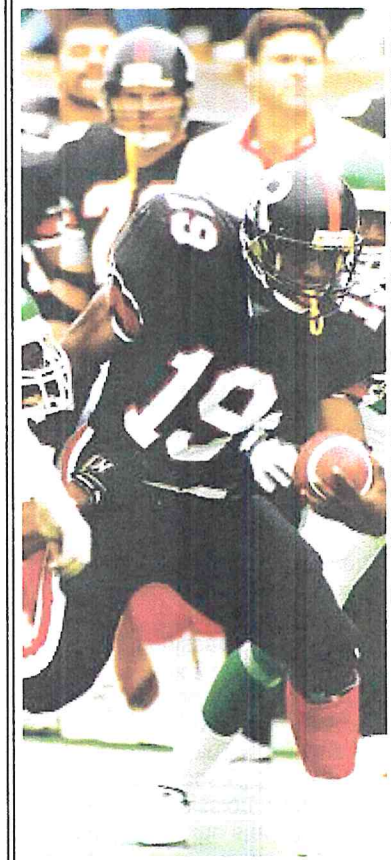
Reggie Barnes - Running Back - 1990-93, 96 - Delaware State University

By-CFL-H



Reggie Barnes graduated from Delaware State University in 1988. While at Delaware State Barnes had won a MEAC championship in 1985 as a freshman, in the title game as a freshman Barnes had run for an 80 yard touchdown. Barnes was not drafted into the NFL in 1989 but did attend the New York Jets training camp in 1989, he was released prior to the season.

From there Barnes signed with the Ottawa Rough Riders in May of 1990. The native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania was an instant success on the field. Barnes first saw action in the second week of the season and never looked back compiling 1,260 yards rushing and 5 rushing TDs. He added a 74 yard TD reception in week#3 a thrilling 50-46 victory over Edmonton at Lansdowne Park on July 26. Barnes was named the leagues Most Outstanding Rookie in 1990 as Ottawa finished the year 7-11. Barnes teamed with QB Damon Allen (1,036) to both rush for over 1,000 yards a feat not matched in Ottawa until 2005 when Kerry Joseph and Josh Ranek turned the trick.

Barnes returned in 1991 with no sophomore jinx. He enjoyed his best season as a professional with 1,486 yards and 10 rushing TD's to go with 3 receiving touchdowns. The club again finished at 7-11 and lost to Winnipeg in the Eastern semi-final. In 1992 Barnes had 926 yards rushing and only 2 touchdowns. Ottawa improved to 9-9 for the season the clubs first .500 season since 1983. In the playoffs Ottawa lost a heartbreaker to Hamilton 29-28 on a last second Paul Osbaldiston field goal. Barnes put up a valiant effort in the game played in snowy conditions at Ivor Wynne Stadium Barnes rushed for 151 yards and a touchdown in the losing cause. It would be his last defining moment with Ottawa.

Barnes returned to Ottawa in 1993 amidst the circus that was the Glieberman ownership at the time. With Dexter Manley brought into the club, management pressured the coaches to play Manley and ultimately Barnes. Reggie a fan favorite was released by the club in July 1993 and then under pressure from the Gliebermans re-signed in October of '93. It was a forgettable year for Ottawa fans and Barnes as the club finished a dismal 4-14.

Yr	Team	No.	Yds	Avg.	Lg	Td
1990	Ott	211	1260	6.0	58	5
1991	Ott	291	1486	5.1	57	10
1992	Ott	204	926	4.5	38	2
1993	Ott	45	233	5.2	28	0
1994	Shr	22	150	6.8	64	2
	Ham	69	372	5.4	51	4
1995	Tor	74	248	3.4	18	4
1996	Ott	26	96	3.7	13	0

Barnes left Ottawa with the Gliebermans and played for Shreveport in 1994 before moving to Hamilton for the end of the '94 season. Barnes signed with Toronto as a free agent in 1995 but struggled with Toronto. Finally, Reggie returned to Ottawa in 1996 to end his career. He did not have much success with the club in 1996 but it was a fitting end to the career for one of the last crowd favorites in Ottawa as an Ottawa Rough Rider.

Ottawa Rough Riders

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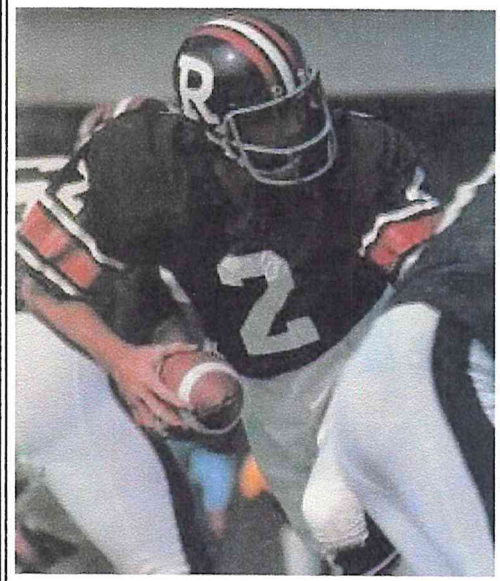
CFL Home

Tom Clement - Quarterback - 1975-87 - Notre Dame



Clements enjoyed an outstanding 12-year career in the CFL with Ottawa (1975-78), Saskatchewan/Hamilton (1979), Hamilton (1981-82) and Winnipeg (1983-87) was inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1994. A seven-time divisional All-Star, Clements led two teams, Ottawa (1976) and Winnipeg (1984), to Grey Cup championships, and earned the Outstanding Offensive Player in both of those contests.

For his career, Clements completed 2,807-of-4,657 passes (60.3 percent) for 39,041 yards and 252 touchdowns. He earned the league's Rookie of the Year in 1975 and MVP in 1987 he also served as a backup for the Kansas City Chiefs in 1980.

Len Pasquarelli - ESPN.com
The former Notre Dame standout gained the support of many Irish former players and coaches during the school's recent coaching search. The native of McKees Rocks, Pa., joined the Pittsburgh staff in 2002 and is the Steelers' first quarterbacks coach since 1973.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1975	Ott	252	144	2013	57.1	13	13
1976	Ott	327	196	3856	59.9	20	13
1977	Ott	298	182	2804	61.0	16	16
1978	Ott	239	152	1990	63.6	17	12
1979	S-H	370	211	2803	57.0	12	18
1981	Ham	523	301	4536	57.5	27	23
1982	Ham	546	356	4706	65.2	26	23
1983	H-W	383	220	2840	57.4	20	16
1984	Wpg	446	279	3845	62.6	29	22
1985	Wpg	425	257	3697	60.4	18	17
1986	Wpg	256	173	2265	67.5	18	11
1987	Wpg	592	336	4686	56.8	35	30

Before taking the Steelers job, Clements was the quarterbacks coach in New Orleans (1997-99) and Kansas City (2000). He also coached the quarterbacks at Notre Dame for four seasons, 1992-95, under Lou Holtz.

His playing career in the CFL included stints at Ottawa (1975-78), Hamilton (1979 and 1981-82) and Winnipeg (1983-87). Clements won a pair of Grey Cup championships, was a seven-time all-star in the CFL, and was inducted into the league's Hall of Fame in 1994. He also played for the Kansas City Chiefs as a backup in 1980. A three-year starter at Notre Dame, he finished fourth in the Heisman Trophy balloting in 1974. In addition, Clements in a licensed attorney,

a 1986 graduate of the Notre Dame Law School.

Ralph Sazio was busy arranging to bring Tom Clements back into the fold from Kansas City Chiefs. Two years ago, in a brief but spectacular half-season as a Ti-Cat before he defected to pursue what he now admits a "childhood dream of playing in the NFL", Clements led the Cats into the playoffs, lifting a mediocre team to dizzying heights.

When the dream became a reality for Clements in Kansas City, it turned into a nightmare. He seldom got off the bench and, despite a long term, six-figure contract, he wanted to come back to Canada. Sazio quietly arranged for the Chiefs to put Clements on waivers on Easter weekend and he passed out of the NFL unnoticed. Sazio had already worked out a new contract for the Notre Dame grad and Clements was back in the CFL with Hamilton for the 1981 season..

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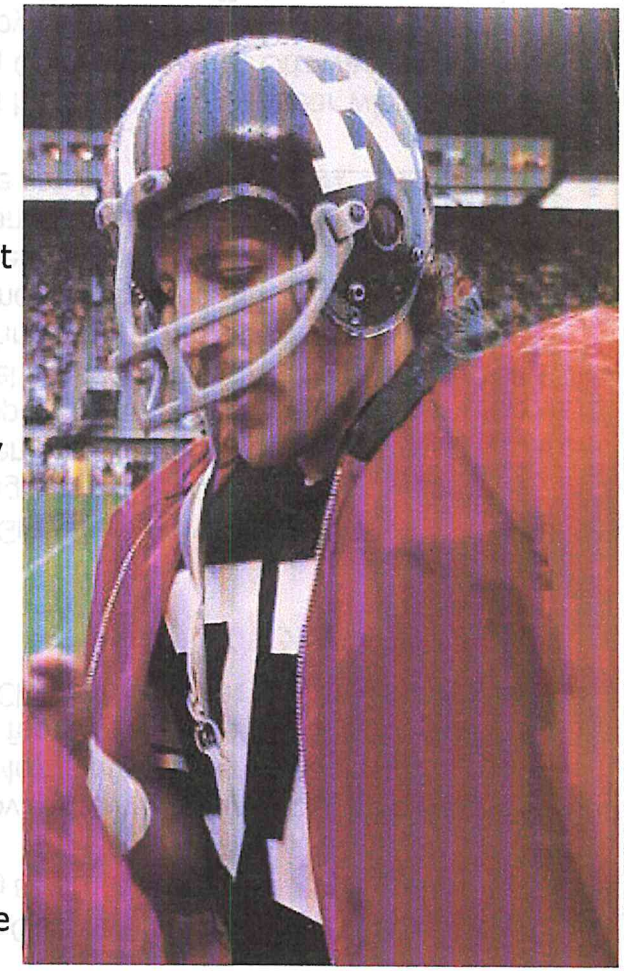
Tony Gabriel - Tight End - 1975-1981 - Syracuse

By-CFL-H



Tony Gabriel enjoyed 7 All-Star seasons with the Ottawa Rough Riders. The Burlington native began his CFL career in 1971 with the Hamilton Tiger Cats. Gabriel had been highly recruited out of Syracuse University as one of the few Canadian born players in NCAA football at the time. Coming out of college Gabriel did have inquiries from the New York Giants but ultimately decided that his best opportunity was in the Canadian Football League. As a true tight end Gabriel enjoyed success with Hamilton. The team did advance to the Grey Cup in 1972 and Gabriel was a key contributor in Hamilton's 13-10 victory with several key catches on the winning drive.

On-going contract disputes with Hamilton General Manager Ralph Sazio eventually culminated in Gabriel getting traded to Ottawa in 1975 in a 5 player deal. Gabriel was already a star having been named the leagues top Canadian in 1973 and '74. It was with Ottawa that Tony would have his greatest impact. Gabriel did start his career with a contract dispute in Ottawa with then coach Frank Clair then in his words:

"Finally, on 26 June 1975, five days before the exhibition season opened, less than a month before the

regular season's start, I signed a new contract with the Ottawa Riders. Smartest move I ever made." -Double Trouble-TonyGabriel&Stanley Filmore, Nelson pg.82

Tony was a true star in the Canadian Football League over the next four seasons he eclipsed 1,000 yards received every year. He was named the League Most Outstanding Player in 1978. Included in those years was his defining moment in professional football. In the 1976 Grey Cup contest versus Saskatchewan Gabriel caught a pass from Tom Clements or what is simply known as "the Catch"

from CBC.ca - http:/news/2003/11/13/Sports/greycuptop10:
It's known simply as "the catch." The scene: the 1976 Grey Cup. A frosty Toronto night. Late in the fourth quarter. Ottawa trailing Saskatchewan 20-16. Cue the comeback. Ottawa quarterback Tom Clements dropped back for a pass from the Saskatchewan 24-yard line hoping for a miracle. His prayers were answered when tight end Tony Gabriel slipped behind the Saskatchewan secondary and reeled in Clements' throw in the back of the end zone with 20 seconds left on the clock. Pandemonium ensued, as Gabriel was mobbed by teammates and fans. Ottawa held on for a 23-20 victory. Gabriel finished with seven receptions in the game, but none were any bigger in his 11-year, Hall of Fame career than "the catch."

Yr	No.	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
1971	20	285	14.3	36	1
1972	49	733	15.0	49	3
1973	40	535	13.4	52	2
1974	61	795	13.0	46	3
1975	65	1115	17.2	46	10
1976	72	1320	18.3	62	14
1977	65	1362	21.0	75	8
1978	67	1070	16.0	80	11
1979	48	761	15.9		8
1980	54	850	15.7	53	5
1981	73	1006	13.8	46	5

Tony played with Ottawa through the 1981 season and had another great year with over 1,000 yard receiving and capturing his final Most Outstanding Canadian award. Ottawa was a suprise entry into the Grey Cup game with a 6-10 record. Led by upstart Quarterback J.C.Watts the Rough Riders and Gabriel faced the mighty Edmonton Eskimos. Tony was suffering from a partial ligament tear in his left knee but went on to play in what would be his final game. Ottawa would lose a heartbreaker to Edmonton 26-23 in what would be the last game of the incredible career of Tony Gabriel.
Fittingly the Ottawa Rough Riders would never reach the Grey Cup game again.

The last of a CFL era of tight ends Tony Gabriel was a true legend of Canadian Football and the Ottawa Rough Riders.

Ottawa Renegades

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Bernie & Lonie Glieberman - Owners - 1992-93, 2005

CBC Sports On-line June 9, 2005

http://www.cbc.ca/sports/columns/newsmakers/gliebermans.html

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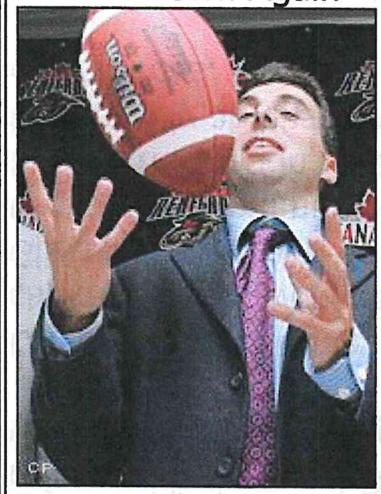
Back In Town Again -



Lonie Glieberman's favourite phrase is "Anything is possible in the CFL." Still is, it seems, because the Gliebermans have once again bought Ottawa's beleaguered pro football franchise. After weeks of negotiations, the father-and-son tandem of Bernie and Lonie Glieberman bailed out the Ottawa Renegades, just as it did with the troubled Rough Riders for two years in the 1990s. Bernie Glieberman enjoys majority control of the Renegades with with Bill Smith and Brad Watters, part of the original ownership group, keeping 49 per cent of the franchise. Lonie will serve as team president, the same position he held with the Rough Riders. The CFL board of governors remains somewhat skeptical of the Gliebermans, but approved the sale when it became apparent there was no one else interested in the troubled franchise.

TIMELINE: HISTORY OF OTTAWA FOOTBALL

The Gliebermans didn't take long in making one key personnel change, installing 71-year-old Forrest Gregg as the Renegades' new vice-president of

operations. Gregg is a Hall of Fame offensive lineman and former CFL and NFL coach who hasn't been involved in pro football for 10 years. When last heard from, Gregg was working with the Gliebermans on the formation of the All-American Football League – it never materialized. Rather than risk losing its football team, the City of Ottawa is prepared to reconcile past differences with the Gliebermans, who irked many a municipal politician the first time around.

"If you look at some of the statements from the Gliebermans, they say they're reformed," observed Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli. "But the issue ultimately rests with the CFL board of governors."

Lonie, 37, and Bernie, his deep-pocketed dad, first set foot in the nation's capital in 1991 with wads of American greenbacks and promises aplenty. Glieberman, a third-generation builder and sole shareholder of Detroit-based Crosswinds Communities, the construction company he established in 1971, bought the Rough Riders for a buck, assumed nearly $1 million in debt and – temporarily at least – revived the team's fortunes before turning it into a three-down circus.

Backed by Bernie, and fronted by Lonie, Ottawa finished a respectable 9-9 that first season and its stock rose. After all, it marked the first time since 1979 that the Riders had played .500 football. But one year and several misguided moves later, the Riders were the league laughing stock and the interventionist Gliebermans became public enemies No. 1.

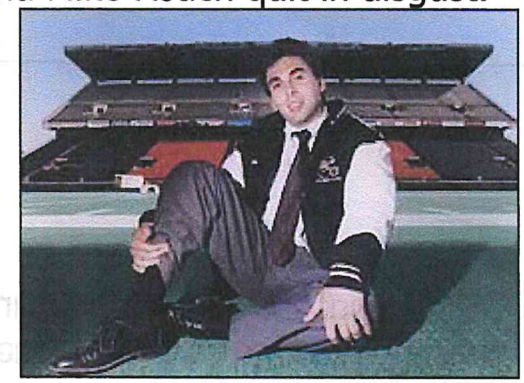
"That was the perception at the time," Lonie recently said. "I would hope people don't hate me now."

Lonie, then 27, fired general manager Dan Rambo on the eve of the 1993 CFL

season, a move that proved to be the first of many mistakes made by the impish, if not immature, team president.

"The biggest was firing Dan Rambo," Lonie admitted. "Every other mistake flowed from that one."

Mistakes like bringing former All-Pro sack machine Dexter Manley and his considerable cocaine habit to town, despite the fact he was banned by the NFL. And, as CFL fans quickly discovered, washed up. When Glieberman ordered the coaching staff to start Manley, and to bring back training-camp cuts Reggie Barnes and Brian Bonner, assistants Jim Daley and Mike Roach quit in disgust.



Lonie's bodyguard remained loyal, however, making headlines after he got into a fight at an Ottawa bar. Lonie himself raised a ruckus by dating Riders cheerleaders. Fans scoffed at Lonie's hilarious pursuit of former NFL head coach Mike Ditka and fumed over Bernie's constant threats to relocate the team stateside. Instead, he sold the Riders to Bruce Firestone for $1.85 million and established the Shreveport Pirates, considered a key cog in the CFL's (failed) expansion into the United States. As he left for Louisiana, Lonie was sued by the City of Ottawa for monies owed and, in turn, filed a countersuit.

"We won," Lonie recalled. "But nobody mentions that."

The Pirates posted an 8-28 record over two seasons in steamy Shreveport before Glieberman vowed to relocate them to Virginia. There, he agreed to

rename them the Hampton Roads Pirates or Norfolk Pirates if the city coughed up $400,000 in renovations. But local politicians politely showed Glieberman the door upon learning that he had lawsuits pending in Louisiana and had his antique automobile, a 1948 Tucker Torpedo worth upwards of $500,000 US, impounded because he still owed a company $273,932 for Shreveport's scoreboard. In a story as classic as the car itself, Glieberman told his lawyer, Mark Gilliam, to retrieve the Tucker from a local museum before it was seized by federal authorities.

Gilliam was driving the car to an undisclosed location when it ran out of gas, forcing him to call for a tow truck, which was later pulled over by a sheriff's deputy. Police seized the vintage Tucker and returned it to the museum until the dispute was settled.

Indeed, anything is possible in the CFL.

with files from CP Online

Ottawa Rough Riders

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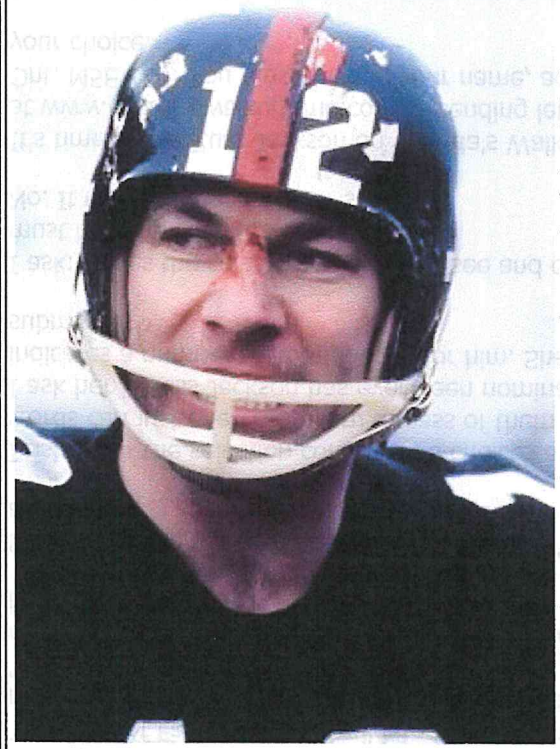
CFL Home

Russ Jackson - Quarterback - 1958-69 - McMaster University



Russ Jackson was born on January 28, 1936. Russ was a star athlete in basketball, hockey and football.

In 1958, at the age of 22, Russ started to play professional football in the CFL. He played all 11 years of his career in Ottawa, playing for the Rough Riders. Russ led the team to the Grey Cup finals 4 times; 3 of these times the Rough Riders came out victorious. Russ was a 6-time Eastern All-Star, and to add to that, he was named to the Canadian All-Star team 3 times.

Tue, November 23, 2004 CFL legend is Walk-worthy By Earl McRae

The occurrence that led me to The Great Insult of Russ Jackson was the two red-coated Mounties carrying the Grey Cup onto the field after Sunday's game.

The Mounties and Canadiana thing got me to thinking of Russ Jackson, the greatest quarterback who ever played in the CFL, and who also happens to be Canadian.

Russ Jackson led his Ottawa Rough Riders to four Grey Cups, winning three of them. Russ Jackson was named the CFL's Most Outstanding Player three times. Russ Jackson was named the CFL's Most Outstanding Canadian Player four times. Russ Jackson was a CFL all-star three times. Russ Jackson was an Eastern all-star six times. Russ Jackson is in the Canadian Football Hall Of Fame. Russ Jackson has the Order of Canada.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1967	Ott	323	189	3332	58.5	25	9
1968	Ott	305	171	3187	56.1	25	16
1969	Ott	358	193	3641	53.9	33	12

If the football exploits of Russ Jackson, legend, were worthy enough for the Order of Canada, are they not worthy enough for Canada's Walk of Fame that was introduced in 1998 on a strip of Toronto sidewalk and with the signatures, inside stars, of 82 Canadians dead and alive?

But Russ Jackson is not there. In fact, not one Canadian football player is.

"We pride ourselves on acknowledging the achievements and success of amazing Canadians," says the Walk website. "For the most part, these extraordinary people include those who have excelled in sports, entertainment, or the arts."
Russ Jackson is forever embedded in the mystique and lore that is the Canadian Football League which is more truly Canadian than the primarily American-based NHL, and with football roots in this country deeper than hockey's.
The Walk of Fame says a candidate has to be nominated, the nominations going to a selection committee who recommend inductees to the board of directors for the annual June ceremony.
"I didn't know you had to be nominated," says Russ Jackson. "I don't know if I've ever been."
Alicia Wanless is head of special projects for the Walk of Fame. I ask her: "Do you not think Russ Jackson should be on the Walk?"

She says: "I've never heard of him, who is he?" I tell her. She says: "It does seem bizarre. It's not a conspiracy or anything."

I ask her if the selection committee's choices are based on volume of nominations or quality of a nominee; in other words can just one vote usurp a mass of them for a less meritorious candidate. "Yes," she says.
I ask her if Russ Jackson has ever been nominated. She goes to check. "Yes. He does have a file." That, she says, indicates a number of nominations for him. She says she's unable to determine how many or when they were submitted.

I ask: "Does the selection committee see and consider each and every nomination?" She says: "Yes." And then: "It must be a coincidence."
No. It must be ignorance or stupidity.

It's time to get Russ Jackson on Canada's Walk of Fame. You can do it by nominating through the Walk's website at www.canadaswalkoffame.com or sending letters to Canada's Walk Of Fame, 1 Yonge St., Suite 1401, Toronto, Ont. M5E 1E5. You must include your name, address, phone number and in 50 words or less explain the reason for your choice.

Do it not only for Russ Jackson but for other deserving CFL Canadian icons.

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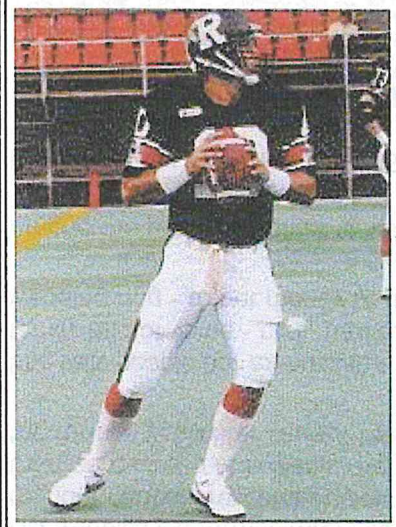
CFL Home

Art Schlichter - Quarterback - 1988 - Ohio State

By-CFL-H



Art Schlichter finished fourth, sixth and fifth in the Heisman balloting in three years at Ohio State.

Gambling's big losers In the sporting world, Don Campbell, CanWest News Service, Friday, February 10, 2006

Who would have bet a one-time can't-miss No. 4 overall National Football League draft pick would, almost 25 years later, be in a Ohio prison cell, serving a 15-year sentence, with a debt in the millions that can never be repaid, while many of his college football contemporaries are finding their way to the Pro Football Hall of Fame.

Maybe only Art Schlichter himself, the onetime Ottawa Rough Riders quarterback who left Ottawa almost as fast as he arrived in the 1980s, leaving behind a trail of bounced cheques.

All the result of a gambling obsession that ruined his life and his family, making him sport's most pathological gambler - well, at least until Pete Rose.

Schlichter, now in his mid-40s, had everything going for him when Sports Illustrated flashed the Ohio State Buckeye quarterback on its cover in 1979. He was a home-state hero, Ohio-born, a golden-boy pivot with good looks and a rifle arm.

Yr	A	C	Yds	Pct	Int	LG	TD
1988	89	41	658	79.1	7	64	3

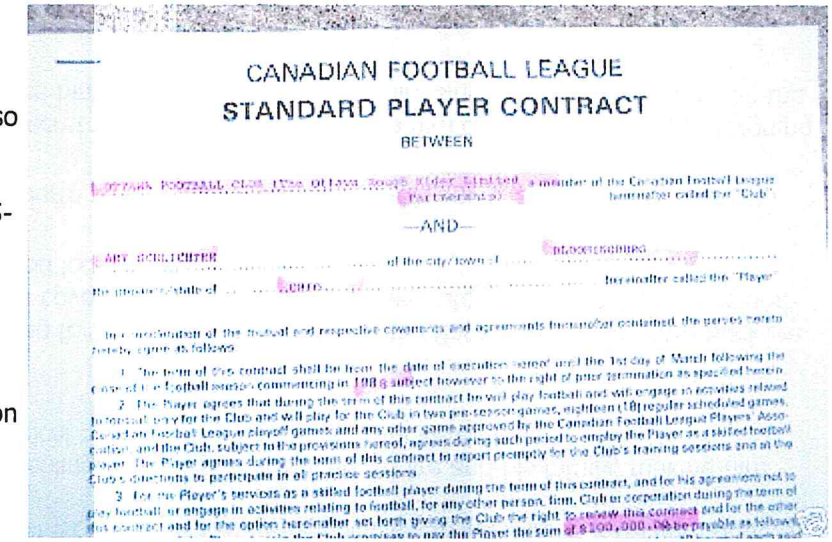
Three years later, the Baltimore Colts made him the fourth pick overall in the 1982 draft and the sky seemed the limit.

Instead, the gambling problem he managed to keep secret through college would rob him of his entire $350,000 signing bonus and send him on a downhill spiral that would see him spend every year of his life since either in prison, or on the run from authorities or bookies.

Schlichter stole from everyone from his parents to his in-laws, to even fans of a call-in show he once ran - all in the hopes of hitting the big one. And if he did win a bet, he merely tried again. And if he lost, he tried to go bigger.

Schlichter was suspended in 1983, then re-instated in 1984, but his obsession continued. After the Colts cut Schlichter in 1985, he played a few seasons of arena football and finally finished his career in the CFL with Ottawa in 1988.

Art Schlichter's 1988 Ottawa Rough Riders Professional football contract paid the former Ohio State all american $100,000 to play in the Canadian Football League during the 1988 CFL season. Art also got a $10,000 signing bonus. That same year, he filed for bankruptcy, claiming to be more than $1 million U.S. in debt. And he is currently serving a 15-year prison sentence, one of 10 convictions against him since 1995.



CANADIAN FOOTBALL LEAGUE

STANDARD PLAYER CONTRACT

BETWEEN

—AND—

His troubles led former wife, Mitzi Schlichter to co-found a national research, diagnostic and gambling treatment centre in Indiana, and she often speaks on the turmoil Schlichter caused them.

She tells people her ex-husband sold whatever the family had of value - cars, furniture, even her wedding ring - to get money to gamble.

Among the pros, Schlichter is hardly alone, though his fall may be the most pitiful:

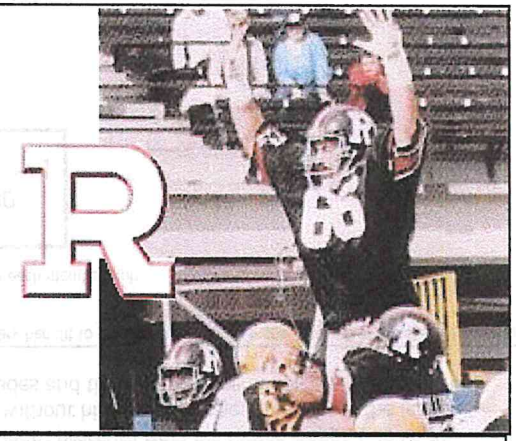
From the New York Time in 1985 - Art takes notice of the CFL: New York Times October 24, 1985 – New York Times

Art Schlichter, the former Indianapolis Colt quarterback who has been looking for another National Football League job since being cut by the Colts two weeks ago, has apparently widened his search to include the Canadian Football League. According to one of his business associates, Gilman Kirk, the Winnipeg Blue Bombers made an approach this week and Schlichter is interested.

"I think they'll consider possibly bringing him in to have a look at him and possibly signing him for next year," said Kirk. "I think Art has some assets that could make him a good quarterback up there." Schlichter has spoken well of the Canadian league. "I've always enjoyed watching the C.F.L.," he said recently. "It's the kind of style of play I'm accustomed to. You need an agile quarterback, one who can throw and run." Kirk also said that four N.F.L. teams had contacted Schlichter, who was waived Oct. 7 after opening the season as a starter for the Colts.

Ottawa

Football



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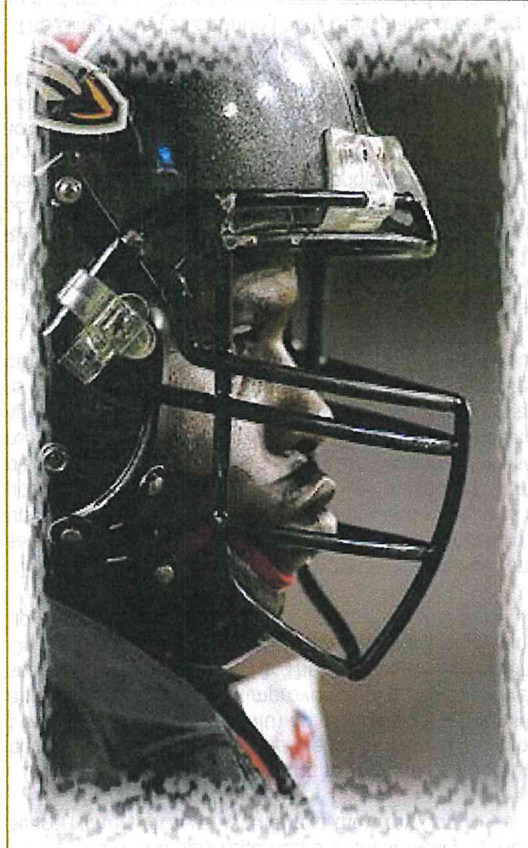


Renegades - 2002-2005

On April 9, 2006 the Canadian Football League voted to suspend the operations of the Ottawa Renegade Football franchise. The decision brought to an end 4 seasons of Renegade football in the Nation's capital.

The Ottawa Renegades were born in 2002 bringing football back to the Nation's capital after the Ottawa Rough Riders has ceased operations following the 1996 season. The Ownership group was led by Brad Watters and a number of Toronto businessman. Watters had achieved sporting success with the Toronto Rock National Lacrosse League franchise. Watters brought the same management technique to Ottawa football. The Watters group proved that Ottawa did want football to return as the team sold 13,000 season tickets. Watters other venture in Ottawa the lacrosse franchise Ottawa Rebel playing in the Civic Centre folded after one season but Ottawa did have a strong season at the gate averaging 23,376 fans per game. An expansion draft brought the club proven players in Kelly Wiltshire, Gerald Vaughn and quarterback Dan Crowley.

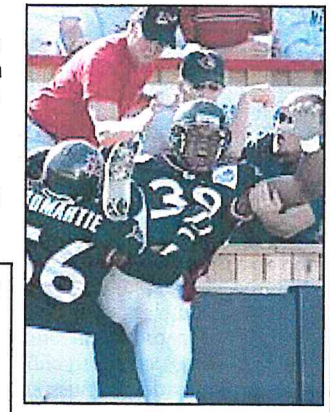
On the field the club struggled to a 4-14 record. Dan Crowley the clubs starting quarterback struggled throwing 16 touchdowns to go with 19 interceptions. Receiver Jimmy Oliver eclipsed 1,000 yards receiving to go with 6 touchdowns. Import kicker Lawrence Tynes joined the club at midseason and immediately solved the club kicking woes. Despite the poor record a good foundation was laid for year#2.

	Yr	Att	Cmp	Yds	TD	Int
Dan Crowley	02	454	223	2697	16	19
Kerry Joseph	03	475	269	3694	19	20
Kerry Joseph	04	317	197	2762	13	10
Kerry Joseph	05	537	337	4466	25	23

The club was optimistic returning in 2003, General Manager Eric Tillman and head coach Joe Paopao kept continuity with the line-up but did add some healthy competition at quarterback entering training camp. Kerry Joseph (pictured) starting training camp as the #4 quarterback on the depth chart but ended camp as the back-up. Following early struggles and eventual injury to Dan Crowley, Joseph assumed the starting role. In his first game as the starter Joseph dazzled fans with a complete performance. On July 10, 2005 Joseph led the home town Renegades to a thrilling 34-32 victory over the Damon Allen led Toronto Argonauts. The team improved on defence

and Tynes was widely regarded the finest kicker in the circuit. Ottawa finished the season 7-11. The club was in good shape heading into 2004 a season where Ottawa would host the Grey Cup.

It was in the off-season leading to the 2004 season that changes began to take place in the franchise. Frustrated with a salary cap that was not being adhered to league wide the team, having lost money, began to cut costs wherever possible. Watters role with the club was limited and John Lisowski a business man with an accounting background was brought in to cut costs. Lisowski's effort limited what General Manager Eric Tillman was able to do to continue to improve the team competitively. The season was a step back, with the playoffs as the goal the Renegades finished the season a disappointing 5-13. The practice roster was limited, new additions to the club were restricted due to the fiscal changes in club philosophy. On the field Kerry Joseph was injured and the clubs woes worsened. Rookie quarterback Brad Banks showed promise but the season would not end up as the club had hoped.



Following a successful Grey Cup that was a sell-out and did make money for the ownership. That same ownership saw the event as the last chance for any type of return on their initial investment. The original ownership had given up on trying to make the finances work and were tired of putting money into the team. Watters moved on from his post as club president. Eric Tillman was moved out of his post as General Manager in another cost saving move placing the responsibility on coach Joe Paopao. While several of the owner divested their interest in the team, the remaining owner Orillia millionaire Bill Smith was looking for a way to reclaim some of his initial investment. Bernie and Lonie Glieberman who had owned the prior Ottawa Rough Riders in the 1990's with disastrous results returned as 51% partners in the team. Willing to absorb all losses for the 2005 season in an effort to make right the wrongs of their earlier ownership. Smith accepted and the Gliebermans entered with Lone being named team president.

Ottawa Renegades	
2003	4-14
2004	7-11
2005	5-13
2006	8-10

Joe Paopao returned for what would be a lame duck season. The club opened the season strong. Joseph led the Renegades to a thrilling victory over the Montreal Alouettes on Canada Day 39-36. Following an August 17 victory over Saskatchewan the Renegades sat at 5-2 atop the Eastern division the playoffs looked like a definite possibility until the team then went on a 6 game losing streak effectively killing the teams playoff aspirations. An outstanding season for Kerry Joseph as he passed for 4,466 and 25 touchdowns while adding 1,006 yard rushing the first quarterback to achieve that feet since Damon Allen. In addition, Joseph along with running back Josh Ranek (1,157 yards rushing) became the first tandem since Rough Riders Damon Allen and Reggie Barnes to combine to both rush for 1,000 yars in the same season. The team finished at 8-10 and out of the playoffs.

The Glieberman's continued with their plans replacing Paopao with longtime coordinator John Jenkins. A failed 2 for 1 ticket promotion that ended up costing more than the proceeds generated furthered the clubs woes. Player signings were few and varied and the management team was conspicuously absent from the Ottawa region. With season tickets at embarrassing lows Lone under pressure from his father stepped down as president. What followed was Bernie Glieberman not being willing to cover the losses for 2006 without his son in charge. From there the league sought out a new ownership team. Time constraints proved too debilitating to save the Renegades and they ceased operations on April 9, 2006.

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CFL Home

August 30, 1996 - Frank Clair Stadium
Ottawa 17 - Montreal 6
Attendance: 28,451

-

With the Ottawa Rough Riders franchise facing the threat of extinction the club met the Montreal Alouettes at Frank Clair Stadium on a summer evening on August 30, 1996. One night in a season or decade or generation of franchise blunders that had left a public with little to cheer or care about from the team. On that night in late August 28,451 paying customers came to pay tribute to a 120 year old Canadian sports institution that was facing extinction. The beleaguered team responded to the support to give the city one final glowing moment before fading into history. Facing a supremely talented Alouette team with both Mike Pringle and Elfrid Payton returned from NFL camps the outlook was not good. The team responded for the city and deafening cheers that night proved undeniably what football could be in that city. What follows is an article from Tim Harper of the Toronto Star on that night in Ottawa:

-

Excerpted - Tim Harper - Ottawa Bureau - Toronto Star - August 31, 1996

OTTAWA - Kieran Marks got to stay up late last night. And although the sense of history may have been lost on the 10-week-old infant, it was paramount in the minds of his father Mitch Marks, a young man who grew up with the Ottawa Rough Riders when a late summer night at old Lansdowne Park was a way of life here.

"Just in case this is it, I wanted my son to be able to come to a game here," Marks said.

"This could be his first and his last" said Kieran's mother Janice Marks.

There was no mistaking the sense of occasion as the Rough Riders took on the Montreal Alouettes.

With a 120-year tradition in its death throes, football fans in the national capital responded. So did the Riders, who scored a 17-6 victory over the Alouettes before 28,451 cheering, chanting fans - better than double the season average. They finally flocked to the stadium to watch a team which has won nine Grey Cups but is no longer a part of the fabric of the city.

They know no one is crying wolf anymore and on a gorgeous late summer evening they flocked to the park out of a sense of fear, nostalgia, the inherent drama of the possibility that this would be the last kickoff ever.

In some cases they came out of guilt.

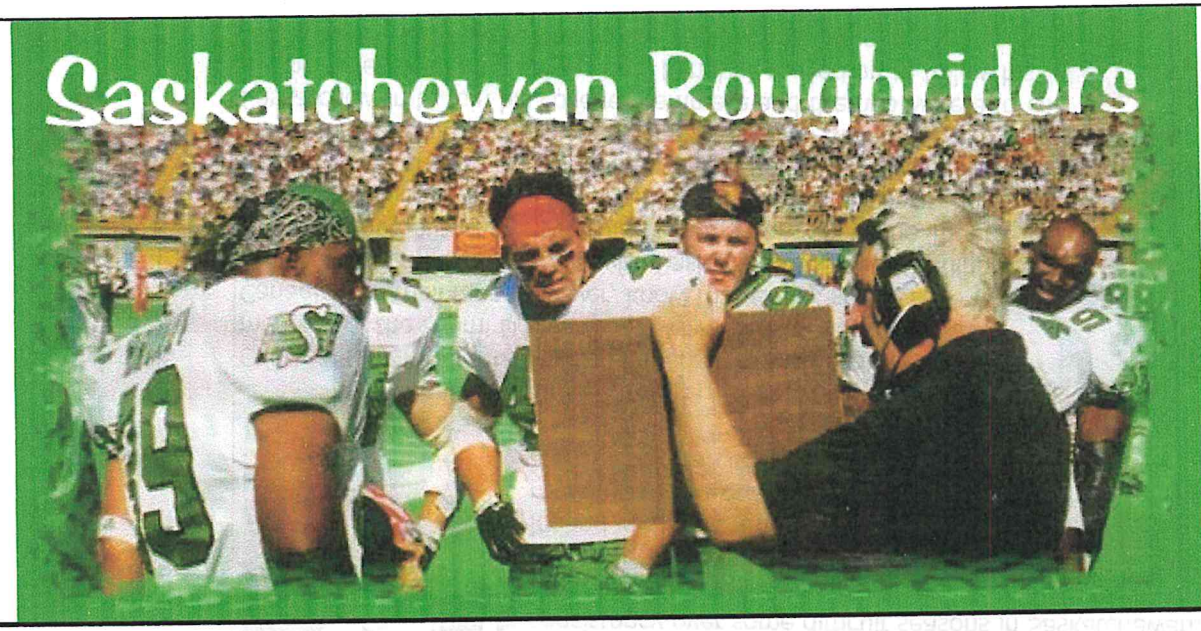
But as they rose as one to salute their team as it took the field in its most desperate hour, there were unmistakable realities at play. Even the most enthusiastic among them were staying away from predictions that this team would ever play again.

Many were old friends of the team who had drifted away only to return sheepishly, the way one would skulk into a hospital upon learning a long lost friend was near the end.

-

Quarterback David Archer hit Wayne Walker for a 33 yard touchdown strike with 1:23 remaining in the first half for the decisive points in the 17-6 victory. The fans cheered their team and the Rough Riders responded. While the enthusiasm for the club would fizzle out for the season and the team ultimately fold at the end of the year-the late August night in Ottawa provided a lasting image and lasting victory for the Rough Rider fans in attendance that night.

Saskatchewan Roughriders



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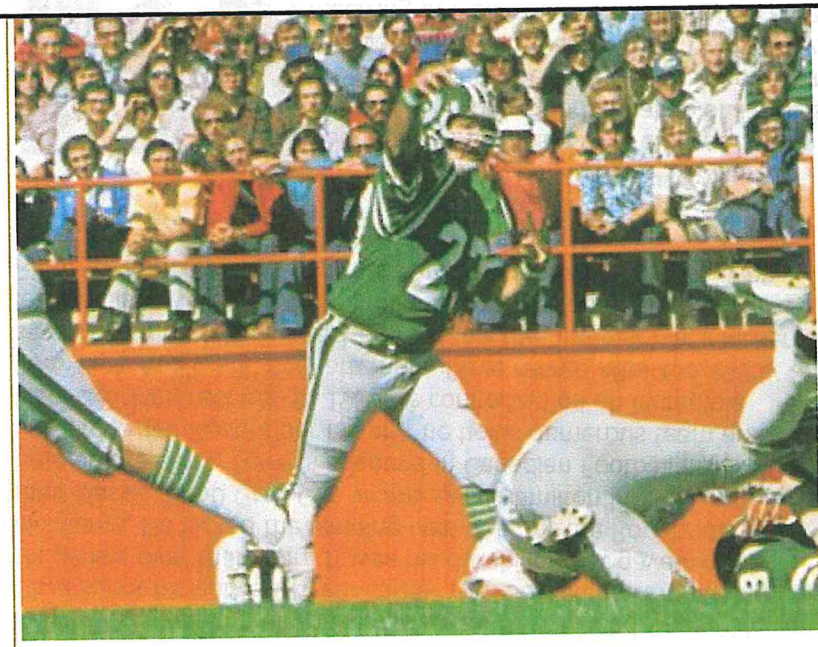
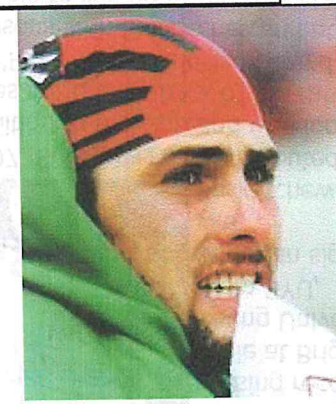


#23

Ron Lancaster is a true legend in Canadian Football. A Hall of Fame player he spent 16 season with Saskatchewan. He led the Roughriders to a Grey Cup Championship in 1966. The Pennsylvania native dubbed the 'Little General' was named the leagues Most Outstanding Player in 1970 and again in 1976. He retired in 1979 as a player and went on to have a Hall of Fame career as a coach with Saskatchewan,



Bobby Jurasin was the face of the Roughrider defence for 12 seasons. He was a fixture at Defensive End first joining Saskatchewan in 1986 out of Northern Michigan University. Over his 11 seasons he compiled a club record 142 quarterback sacks. He was a CFL All-Star on 4 occasions. He was on the 1989 Grey Cup

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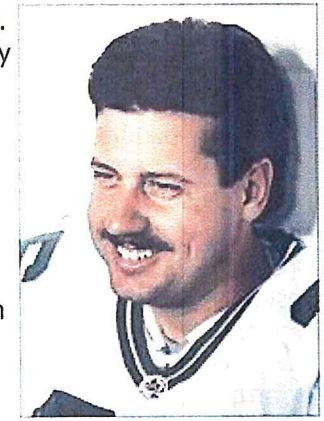
Edmonton and Hamilton. Read more about Ron here...

Robo-Kicker was the nickname for Roughrider legend Dave Ridgway. Dave spent his entire 14 year career with Saskatchewan missing only six games over that span. It was his durability that gave him his nickname. He kicked the winning field goal for the Roughriders in their classic 43-40 Grey Cup victory over Hamilton in 1989 with no time on the clock. Dave is a legend in Canadian Football and Saskatchewan Roughrider history, he holds numerous team and league kicking records. In 1993 he connected on an incredible 90.6% of his 53 field goal attempts. Dave retired after the 1995 season with his legacy intact as arguably the greatest place kicker in league history. Read more about the longevity and legacy of Dave Ridgway from an article by Paul Yanko and virtual Saskatchewan here...

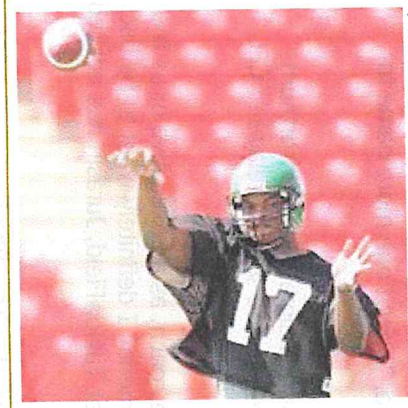


Donald Narcisse was a fixture at receiver in Saskatchewan for 13 seasons. The sure-handed native of Texas spent his entire career with the Roughriders. He joined Saskatchewan in 1987 after an outstanding college career at Texas Southern University. He eclipsed 1,000 yard receiving in a season 8 times over his career and was model of consistency over some difficult seasons in Saskatchewan. He was named a CFL all-star on 4 occasions. In the Roughriders Grey Cup victory in 1989 he had 5 catches for 98 yards and a touchdown. A true legend with his brown glass cutter gloves; Donald will always be remembered as one of the greatest receivers in CFL history. read more about Narcisse here...

Charles "Chuck" Klingbeil is remembered by most football fans as a member of the Miami Dolphins defensive line in the mid-1990's. Canadian football fans however, know that Chuck started his professional career in the CFL with Saskatchewan in 1989. Klingbeil captured the defensive player of the game honours in the 'Riders 1989 Grey Cup victory registering two quarterback sacks in the game. He graduated out of Northern Michigan University the same program as Saskatchewan legend Bobby Jurasin. Klingbeil came to Saskatchewan to join his college teammate and the two were a force on the defensive line together until Klingbeil moved on to follow his NFL dreams with Miami. Read more about Chuck here...

Championship and also registered a sack in the Riders' appearance in the 1997 Championship game. Jurasin put his all into every snap for Saskatchewan. read more about Bobby here...

Steve Sarkisian broke a number of Steve Young's passing records while at Brigham Young University. From BYU, Sarkisian signed with Saskatchewan in 1997. Steve was a highly touted addition to the club and was looked at as the quarterback of the future for 'Rider fans. Sarkisian played 3 seasons with Saskatchewan but was unable to live up to the expectations. Steve was the clubs starting quarterback in 1999 and passed for 16 touchdowns and 21 interceptions. He retired as a player after the '99 season and has moved into coaching. read more about Steve here...



The 1997 Roughriders made an improbable run to the Grey Cup game. Just as in 1989 Saskatchewan went in to Calgary and Edmonton and were victorious on the road to advance to the 1997 Grey Cup. Although they could not match the victory of 1989, it was an exhilarating ride for Rider fans across the country. The main catalyst of that drive was the clubs talented quarterback Reggie Slack. Slack was a supremely gifted athlete who could carry a team as well as lead it. Reggie enjoyed an incredible run. His ability to gain yards through the air and on the ground kept opposing defences guessing. While his final two seasons in Saskatchewan in 98' and 99' were not great successes he will always be remembered for leading the charge in 1997. Read more about Reggie here...

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Bobby Jurasin - Defensive End - Saskatchewan Roughriders - 1986-97

Bobby Jurasin with his trademark Land of The Rising Sun bandanna; now that is a lasting image in Roughrider history. Bobby Jurasin played 13 seasons in the CFL, 12 with Saskatchewan. Over his career he collected 142 sacks, the third highest total in CFL history. He joined Saskatchewan in 1986 out of Northern Michigan; at that time James We was the blueprint for success as a sack specialist in the CFL. Jurasin on West (CFL Illustrated 1988):

"He's definately a role model. When I first got up here in 1986, I watche a lot of film on Parker. I don't compare myself with him, but I take ideas from the way he plays. He has quick moves and he uses head fakes well."

In 1987, Jurasin was a CFL all-star setting the Roughrider single season record with 22 sacks. He had double digit sack totals from '87 to '95 winning the Grey Cup with Saskatchewan in 1989. He was named a Western Divison All-Star on 6 occasions and a CFL All-Star 4 times including his final season with the Roughriders in 1997.

In 1997 Jurasin led the suprising Riders defence to stunning victories over Calgary and Edmonton to advance to the Grey Cup. The game would ultimately be his final appea e with Saskatchewan, and although Saskatchewan was defeated 47-23 Bobby went in style with a sack of Argonaut QB Doug Flutie for a 17 yard loss. Jurasin was unceremoniously released from Saskatchewan prior to the 1998 season and although he did go on to play 2 games with Toronto before retiring, he will always b remembered as a Saskatchewan Roughrider.

Jurasin has returned to Saskatchewan on certain occasions and has his sights set on one day coaching in the league in which he was a perennial all-star as a player... excerpted from Slam Sports:

"I wanted to play," Jurasin said with a chuckle before the game. "I need one more game for 200. I asked and asked if I could play, but they said no."

Jurasin, is the defensive-line and strength/conditioning coach at his alma mater -- Northern Michigan University in Marquette, Mich. Eventually, he hopes to provide some tutelage to CFL players. He has an ideal location in mind.

"When the time is right, I will be back here -- whether it's as a coach, as an executive or as the mayor," Jurasin said. "The 12 years I spent here were phenomenal. I definitely want to be back here at some point in time." Seven years after last suiting up at Taylor Field, Jurasin has noticed some significant changes.

"I walked around the park today and saw all the different things they're doing here -- with the (video board), the (renovated) bathrooms, the locker room and everything else," he said. "The administration is starting to spend money to give fans the total entertainment package."

"As an alumnus, I'm very pleased to see what they're accomplishing here."

Year	Sac
1986	3
1987	22
1988	16
1989	16
1990	10
1991	10
1992	10
1993	14
1994	12
1995	8
1996	11
1997	10
1998	0

Saskatchewan Roughriders

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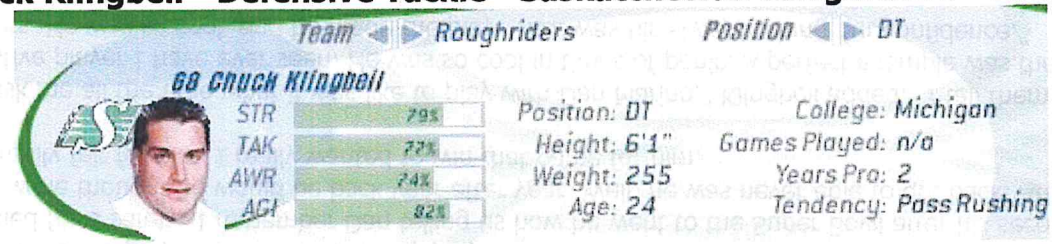
Chuck Klingbeil - Defensive Tackle - Saskatchewan Roughriders - 1989-90



Alumni Spotlight - April 11, 2002 - Miami Dolphins Official Site -

Klingbeil's road to the NFL was one less traveled. After staring at Northern Michigan, where he earned Most Outstanding Defensive Lineman honors following his sophomore, junior and senior seasons, Klingbeil drew no interest from NFL teams. Klingbeil even earned all-conference honors following his junior year, but the NFL stayed away. As a result, he decided to sign as a free agent with the Saskatchewan Roughriders of the Canadian Football League. A friend of his thought it would be good for him.

"I had a friend who played in the CFL and that is why I went up there," Klingbeil said. "I guess I could have tried out as a free agent in the NFL right away, but I just didn't think I had the coaching coming out of college so I stayed there for two years."

Klingbeil hoped his $30,000-a-year job north of the border would be his stepping stone to the NFL. He got his wish. Klingbeil helped the Roughriders win a CFL title and in the process earned defensive Most Valuable Player honors in Saskatchewan's 43-40 Grey Cup victory over Hamilton. Two seasons later, he was playing for the Miami Dolphins.

Klingbeil served mainly as a backup during his first season with the Dolphins in 1991, but got plenty of playing time as the Dolphins played five different people at nose tackle because of injuries. In his first NFL start against Tampa Bay, Klingbeil recorded five tackles and his first career sack. He finished his first NFL season with 17 tackles and a career-high five sacks.

After the arrival of Hall of Famer Joe Greene as the Dolphins defensive line coach in 1992, Klingbeil became a full-time starter, and the Dolphins full-time run stopper. In 1994, Klingbeil was the anchor on the Dolphins defensive line that set a new team record for fewest rushing yards allowed in a season.

"I really learned a lot about the game from Joe Greene," Klingbeil said. He really taught me how to play the position. Before he came to Miami I was very raw."

"He constantly made improvement, and I thought he was very good even before I started working with him," Greene said, "He understood what we were doing, what the role of the people around him was, the role he played and how important it was.

"I think we probably depended on him more than anybody. They were all important, but if I had to pick one spot where playing the run starts, it's right there with the guy who's over the center."

Two games rest in the back of Klingbeil's mind today, a 16-13 victory over Green Bay in 1991 and a 22-21 playoff loss at San Diego in 1994.

Against the Packers, Klingbeil recovered a Don Majkowski fumble in the endzone in the fourth quarter for his first career touchdown, enabling Shula notch his 300th career victory. The image is forever etched in his mind because he is reminded of it every time he visits Kaleva's restaurant in Hancock, Mich., where photos of Klingbeil line the establishment's walls including one of his fumble recovery.

"That was a play I will always remember," Klingbeil said. "It was probably the highlight of my career because it helped Coach Shula get his 300th win."

At San Diego, Klingbeil saw the Dolphins take a 21-6 halftime lead only to squander it in the second half, thus costing what Klingbeil thought was the Dolphins best chances of going to the Super Bowl.

"That was a terrible loss because we had control of the game," Klingbeil said. "In the second half, we played about as bad as a team could play. We didn't make any plays on defense, we couldn't move the ball on offense and we even got tackled for a safety. I remember Dan telling us how he went to the Super Bowl after his second year in the league and how he thought he would be back year after year. Well, he was never able to get back. After that loss at San Diego, I really felt for him. I really wanted to win that game for him.

"My players ask me all the time what it was like to play with Dan Marino," Klingbeil added. "I tell them he was the most competitive player I have ever seen. He was so cool in times of panic. A perfect example was the clock play against the Jets. He was so cool, and he made the play. That was his style, nothing but confidence."

Three seasons after that heartbreaking playoff loss at San Diego, Klingbeil was out of football. A shoulder injury would seal his fate. It is a time that every player must go through in his career, and while he would have liked to play a few seasons more, Klingbeil is grateful for the time he did have.

"I feel my shoulder injury was my downfall," Klingbeil said. "It still bugs me a little bit, but not many former NFL nose tackles feel great. Still, I have nothing but great memories. Don Shula and Joe Greene had an impact on me, and it is something I will never forget."

It is something he hasn't forgotten. As a coach, he has taken a lot of what he learned as a Dolphin and has passed it on to his players. At times, coaching can frustrate Klingbeil, but it is something he loves to do. One day, he hopes to return to the NFL, this time as a coach.

"I would like to think I could play again," Klingbeil said. But, when I walk out to practice with my players I quickly realize I can't do it anymore. I am still in shape and still an avid weightlifter, but I'm not in football shape anymore. If things fall right, I could see myself coaching in the NFL.

"Coaching does get frustrating at times because you teach these kids how to do something, but you can't do it for them. When they mess up, you just have to keep teaching them. You have to be persistent."

Persistence is what Klingbeil to the NFL the first time around as a player, and persistence should get him back to the NFL. This time as a coach.

Former Dolphins defensive tackle Chuck Klingbeil still remembers his days as a member of the Miami Dolphins. He remembers the intensity of pregame warmups. He remembers the feeling of camaraderie with the other players. He remembers the class in which the Dolphins ran their organization. These are feelings that he longs for today.

Football was a part of Klingbeil's life since high school, but it wasn't the only thing in his life. Growing up in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, in the town of Houghton, Klingbeil was a 220-pound all-state hockey defenseman who outweighed most of his teammates by 60 pounds. That, according to Klingbeil, is why he spent so much time in the penalty box. In fact, he led his team in penalty minutes by a margin of three-to-one.

He wasn't just a goon, however, he had some skill as he scored eight goals and added 18 assists as a senior, but when the football recruiters came calling before the hockey recruiters, he decided to play college football. That decision would eventually lead him to the Miami Dolphins.

"The entire Miami Dolphins organization and Coach Shula are class acts," Klingbeil said. "Playing for the Dolphins was one of the greatest experiences of my life. I had some of my greatest highs and some of my greatest lows playing professional football and I wouldn't change a thing."

Today, Klingbeil has returned to the upper reaches of Michigan where he grew up. He has traded in his cleats for a whistle and is the defensive line and strength and conditioning coach for Michigan Tech, a position he has held for four seasons. Though coaching keeps him busy, he still finds time to follow how his former team is progressing.

"I miss game day," Klingbeil said. "I still watch all of the Dolphins games, and it brings back a lot of good memories. I really miss the guys I played with and I miss the intensity of game day. There is nothing else in life that duplicates it."

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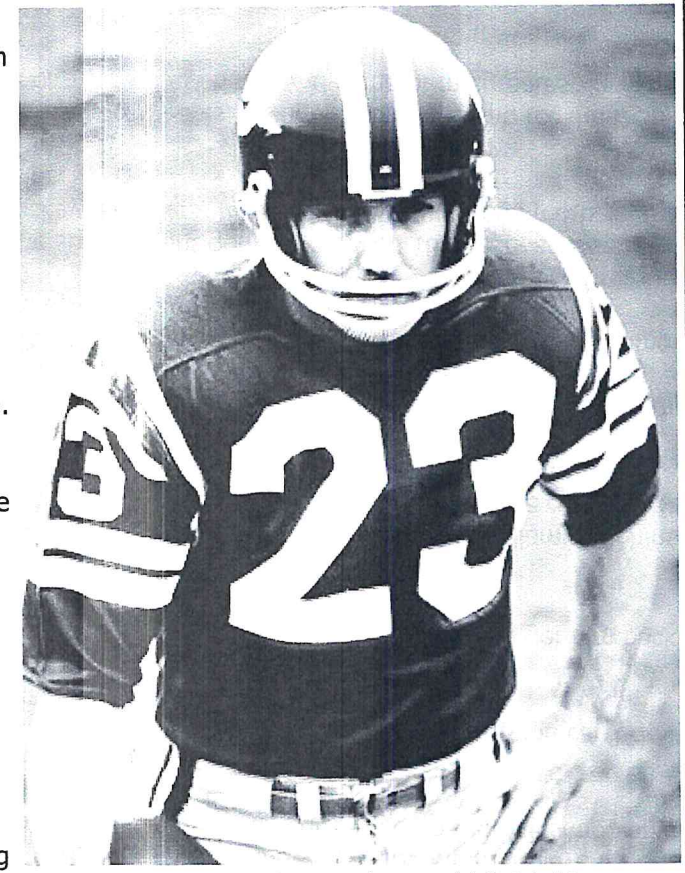
Ron Lancaster - Quarterback - Saskatchewan Roughriders - 1962-1979



Ron started his professional playing career with Ottawa and won the Grey Cup in his rookie season in 1960. He spent two more seasons with Ottawa, sharing the quarterback role with another Hall of Famer, Russ Jackson. Then Lancaster went to Saskatchewan where the Roughriders won 170 games with Ron at quarterback before he retired after 19 seasons as a player.

courtesy: 1995 - Grey Cup Program - Great Moments in Football

On November 26, 1966, two of the greatest quarterbacks to ever play in the CFL square of against one another at Vancouver's Empire Stadium. This Grey Cup is in direct contrast to the 1960 Grey Cup when Ron Lancaster and Russ Jackson were teammates as the Ottawa Rough Riders defeated the Edmonton Eskimos 16-6. Ottawa then traded Lancaster to Saskatchewan in 1963 for $500 and a provision that the Green Riders would never trade him back to an Eastern Division club. The going is tough as Ottawa and Saskatchewan finish the first half of the 1966 Grey Cup tied 14-14. However, Lancaster throws to Hugh Campbell for one touchdown and George Reed motors 31 yards for another in the fourth quarter as Saskatchewan wins its first Grey Cup 29-14. Lancaster, a runner up to Jackson for the Schenley Award as Most Outstanding Player, completes 10 of 20 passes for 159 yards and three touchdowns. Jackson, who would finish his standout career in 1969 with 3 Grey Cup wins, finishes the game with 6 completions on 15 passes for 195 yards and 2 Tds.

Lancaster won the League's Most Outstanding Player award in 1970 and '76.

Ron Lancaster completed his CFL career in 1979 with 3,384 pass completions in 6,233 attempts, and 333 touchdown passes. He is third on the league's career list with 50,535 yards passing. Ron won the Schenley Award as most outstanding player in 1970 and 1976 and was a finalist for the award in 1966. He was an All-Canadian in 1970, 1973, 1975 and 1976 and a Western all-star in 1966, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1973, 1975 and 1976. He was inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1982 and the Canadian Sports Hall of Fame in 1985.

Ron Lancaster became the 17th head coach in Hamilton Tiger-Cat history on November 26, 1997. He currently serves as the team's director of football operations after spending over a season as the club General Manager.
Lancaster was selected the CFL's coach of the year for 1998. It was the second time he has received the award, which he won previously in 1996 with the Edmonton Eskimos.

From 1991 to 1997, Lancaster was the head coach of the Edmonton Eskimos during which time he compiled an 83-43 win-loss regular-season record. The Eskimos played in the Western final six times in Lancaster's seven seasons in Edmonton and were the Grey Cup Champions in 1993.

Player
Grey Cup Champion:
1960, 1966
Grey Cup Finalist:
1967, 1969, 1972, 1976
Tom Pate Memorial Award
1977
Schenley Award:
Most Outstanding Player
1970, 1976
Jeff Nicklin Award:
Outstanding Player in the West
1966, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1976

Coach
Grey Cup Champion 1993, 1999
Grey Cup Finalist 1996, 1998
Annis Stukus Trophy
Coach of the Year 1996, 1998

Special Honours
1982

Passing							
Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1965	Sask	305	160	2586	52.4	17	26
1966	Sask	303	182	2976	60.1	15	19
1967	Sask	330	169	2809	51.2	16	24
1968	Sask	358	181	2969	50.6	12	17
1969	Sask	354	188	3104	53.1	25	28
1970	Sask	330	175	2779	53.0	16	22
1971	Sask	375	192	2759	51.2	16	23
1972	Sask	357	208	2942	58.3	23	20
1973	Sask	464	263	3767	56.7	22	27
1974	Sask	395	222	2873	56.2	20	20
1975	Sask	441	239	2545	54.2	23	27
1976	Sask	494	297	3869	60.1	25	25
1977	Sask	449	255	3072	56.8	14	20
1978	Sask	390	205	2677	52.6	14	20

	Inducted into the CDN Football Hall of Fame **1985** Inducted into the CDN Sports Hall of Fame **1985** Inducted into the Wittenberg University Athletic Hall of Honour **All-Star Recognition** All Canadian All-Star 1970, 1973, 1975, 1976 Western All-Star 1966, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1973, 1975, 1976

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Donald Narcisse - Wide Receiver - Saskatchewan Roughriders - 1987-1999

Rough road for 'Rider Narciss - By DAN BARNES -- Edmonton Sun - 1997

Roughrider receiver Don Narcisse descends on a different Regina classroom every week during the season, surprising kids the way he has opposing defensive backs for 11 solid CFL seasons.

"I show up there and I just express to them the things I went through in my life. Football wasn't always my sport. My mother didn't want me to play because I had asthma and a heart murmur. So I had to stay away from sports.

"And when I finally got the opportunity to play, everybody was still calling me too slow and not tall enough. Eleven years have passed and look at me now.

``I'm the No. 2 receiver in the CFL and it just goes to show that if you have a lot of pride in yourself, nobody can tell you that you can't do something."

The 32-year-old from some place called Port Arthur, Texas really ought to be the Roughriders' poster boy for this Grey Cup, what with his dashing good looks and all.

He truly typifies the Saskatchewan struggle against the Toronto might. He was never supposed to make it in pro football.

At five-foot-nine and 170 pounds he wasn't about to out-leap or out-muscle anybody for an overthrown pass.

You want an underdog, he's your pooch.

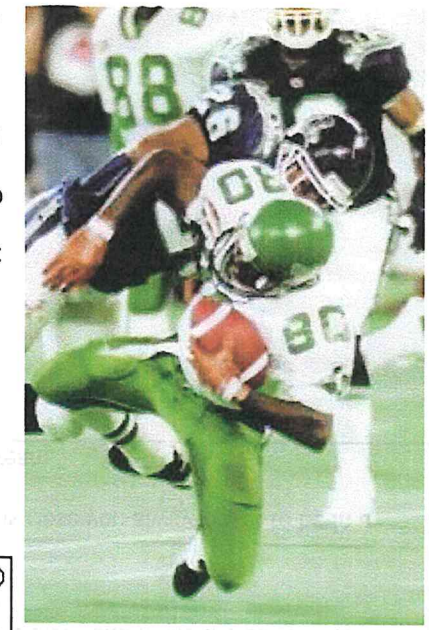
But he's caught 777 passes now for 10,551 yards. He's a seven-time member of the thousand-yard club.

During the 1995 season he broke Tony Gabriel's record for most consecutive games with a reception, pushing it from 137 to 144. And he has his sights set on former teammate Ray Elgaard's CFL record of 830 receptions in a career.

"I'm not going to stop until I get that one."

It won't make him the greatest receiver of alltime. Others have more TDs, more yards, better averages. But it will be another accomplishment that his detractors will have to acknowledge. It will be a credit to his willingness to show up every game day.

"The reason why I'm still playing is I've got a good attitude and work ethic and I come to play each and every day."



Yr	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
1987	25	319	12.8	43	1
1988	21	288	13.7	22	0
1989	81	1419	17.5	74	11
1990	86	1129	13.1	47	9
1991	76	1043	13.7	59	7
1992	80	1034	12.9	65	7
1993	83	1171	14.1	44	9
1994	72	1004	13.9	40	8
1995	123	1288	10.5	40	8
1996	66	906	13.7	77	4
1997	64	950	14.8	47	5
1998	95	1215	12.8	44	7
1999	47	600	12.8	31	1

	And you know he'll be ready tomorrow. He tested two pairs of shoes on the Commonwealth turf yesterday, deciding to go with the Nike Destroyers. But it wasn't his feet he was testing, just his mindset. He was getting ready, imagining the moves he'd make tomorrow, maybe thinking back to 1989 and his first trip to the Grey Cup. Before 1989 he was just another import receiver with average numbers, marking time. But 1989 was his breakthrough year. He caught 81 passes, 11 for TDs and amassed a career-high 1,419 yards. He caught a TD pass in the Grey Cup win too but he wasn't a team leader. "I was 23 years old at that time and I really didn't understand the game. ``I remember we were playing in Toronto and I was always looking up at the Jumbo screen when we were in the huddle. Milson Jones hollered at me, `Get your butt in the game.' "Next thing you know Jeff Fairholm made the big catch and it kinda got everybody relaxed. Today the role we try to do as individuals like (Dan) Rashovich and (Bobby) Jurasin and myself is try to be a leader on the field. ``It's time to show the younger players that we'll take all the pressure, we'll go out there and make the plays. Y'all just go out there and relax." This could be his last Grey Cup, of course, and his goal for the game is simple. He doesn't want personal glory. "I just want to win, because you never know when it's your last. When you get this close you always want to be in a position to win. ``We have the No. 1 fans in the CFL. We have to show them we have the No. 1 team."

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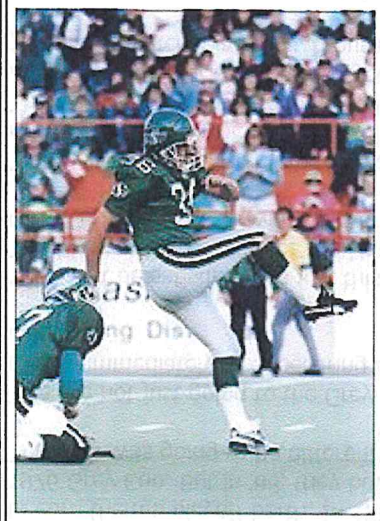
Dave Ridgway - Kicker - Saskatchewan Roughriders - 1982-95

- 10 Year Later – By Paul Yanko http://www.virtualsk.com/current_issue/10_years_after.html

In the greater scheme of things, it was just a football game. But to the people of Saskatchewan, the 1989 Grey Cup game was a fairy tale 23 years in the making. It was on a crisp, late-November afternoon that that fairy tale, and a piece of Saskatchewan history, were written. And Dave Ridgway wrote both pieces - with his foot.



It's a beautiful and hot summer day as Dave Ridgway and I pull up to Taylor Field in Regina to chat about what has become known simply as 'The Kick' (this story was written in 1999). We'd barely made it a few steps from the car when 'Ridge' is recognized by a couple of Saskatchewan Roughrider players headed toward the dressing room to get ready for practice.

'Hey Ridge', they say, and alter their course to shake the hand of an old friend.
After a brief exchange of pleasantries, which include questions on the whereabouts of former teammate and Moose Jaw native Dallas Rysavy (whom they refer to as 'Rice Krispy'), we head into the dressing room.

Ridgway retired from the team at the end of the 1995 season after playing 14 years in the Canadian Football League (CFL). It's been six months since last he visited Taylor Field, athough you'd never know it.
Choruses of 'Hey Ridge' and 'What Up?' arise from former teammates who are still with the Green and White. From the rookies, who know him only through his legendary exploits as one of the finest kickers ever to play the game, he gets respectful nods.
Rider Head Coach Cal Murphy, leaning against a wall and talking to a player, interrupts the conversation briefly to nod and say 'Hi Dave'.

Don Narcisse, one of the few players remaining from the '89 squad, bounces up to him excitedly, shakes his hand, and the two step aside for a brief chat.
Then Ridgway spots longtime equipment manager, Norm Fong.
"Hi Norm," says Ridgway, but in slightly more colorful locker-room jargon. He strolls confidently into Fong's small office.
"You here to kick?" asks Fong, unfazed by Ridgway's unexpected appearance.
"I will be, unless he gets better," quips Ridgway, nodding toward Rider kicker Paul McCallum, who's on a couch in the corner eating soup from a styrofoam bowl. McCallum's nursing a groin injury.
They all share a hearty laugh.
"I miss the guys, I miss that sort of camaraderie," Ridgway tells me later, once we find a quiet place in the stands on the west side of Taylor Field. "I don't miss the game."

It's ironic that Ridgway should even talk about missing anything. During his time in the league he amassed 10 CFL records, including all-time-field-goal-accuracy leader (78.2%), longest field goal (60 yards), and most consecutive field goals (28). During the 1993 season Ridgway booted a nearly impossible 90.6 per cent of his kicks accurately. No wonder everyone outside the dressing room called him 'RoboKicker'.

Yet despite these tremendous accomplishments, Ridgway is best remembered for only one kick. *The* kick.

"I still get people coming up to me and telling me they remember exactly where they were and who they were with," says the 40-year-old Ridgway, who now works for provincial phone utility SaskTel. "This province must have been a pretty quiet place that Sunday!"

The Rider's 1989 regular season was an up and down affair that saw the team finish with a 9-and-9 record, good enough to earn them a playoff berth. In 1988, the Riders made the playoffs for the first time since appearing in (and losing) the 1976 Grey Cup. But in '88, they bowed out after only one game, losing to the B.C. Lions.
This year was going to be different.

"We are not just going to the Grey Cup, we are going to win the Grey Cup," a focused Rider Coach John Gregory told the media, immediately after securing the team's spot in the championship game by defeating the heavily-favored Edmonton Eskimos.

"We can't be satisfied with just this."
The Riders were set to face the Hamilton Tiger Cats at SkyDome, in Toronto. Ridgway recalls the week leading up to that Grey Cup Sunday as a whirlwind of activity, and one in which the pressure was building with every passing day.

"Normally we would get into town and have 24 or 48 hours to kill before a road game," Ridgway explains. "So after three or four days of practicing it's like, 'let's just get going!'. I was getting particularly owly."
The torturous days of practice finally yielded to the Game Day that Ridgway had eagerly anticipated.
A couple of quick Hamilton field goals gave the Tiger Cats a six to zero lead and cast an air of uncertainty over the jubilant Saskatchewan fans, thousands of whom had made their way to SkyDome to cheer on their beloved team.

For years Rider fans have faithfully supported their community-owned team through the good and (mostly) bad times, developing, in the process, something that has become known far and wide as 'Rider Pride'. This sense of undying loyalty earned Rider fans the reputation of being the greatest in the league, and it helped give their team the unofficial title of 'Canada's Team'.

By the middle of the second quarter the Riders had begun to show signs of offensive life. Quarterback Kent Austin had completed touchdown passes to slotbacks Ray Elgaard and Jeff Fairholm, and it was becoming clear that Hamilton would not be allowed to walk away with the Grey Cup. Not without a fight.
Ridgway's first call to duty came on the last play before half-time, a 50-yard attempt.
"It was my first field goal attempt in a championship game and I missed the thing," he recalls, the displeasure still evident in his voice.

The half ended with Hamilton up 27-22.

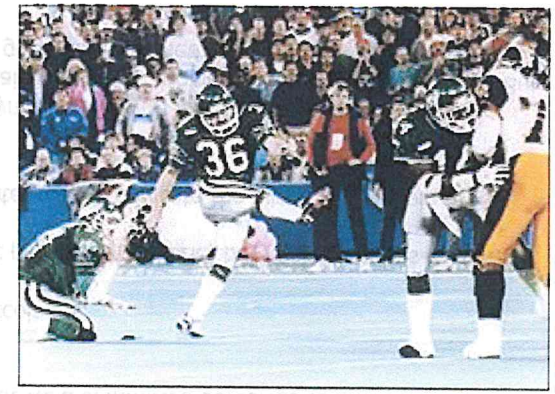
By the end of the third quarter the Riders had moved into the lead, 34-30. With just under two minutes left to go in the fourth the Riders were still ahead 40-33 after Ridgway kicked his third field goal of the day. The stage was set for one of the most exciting finishes in the history of football.
Hamilton quarterback Mike Kerrigan marched his team down the field in a drive that not only ate up a good deal of time, but also allowed the Tiger Cats to tie the game on an acrobatic catch by Hamilton wideout Tony Champion.

"That was a brilliant catch by Champion, one of the best I've ever seen in the game of football," recalls Ridgway. "But at that moment I knew that Kent would get us into field goal range."
And Austin didn't disappoint.

The drive began with 44 seconds left on the clock and included passes to Ray Elgaard and Mark Guy. A final pass to Guy, who stepped out of bounds at the Hamilton 26, followed by one 'kneel-down' to position the ball for 'The Kick', left nine seconds remaining on the clock. The crowd was electrified.
Saskatchewan flags were waving, people were standing and cheering and Dave Ridgway jogged onto the field to attempt the greatest pressure kick of any kicker's career.

"Just before the kick you get into a zone, and I was there," says Ridgway. "I was ready to do the job."
But Hamilton Coach Al Bruno wasn't about to let Ridgway do his job, not just yet. He called a time-out to give the kicker a little more time to mull over the situation, which Ridgway admits is a sound strategy that works.
During the time-out, Ridgway recalls going over to talk to teammate Glen Suitor, who held the ball for him for years (the two remain best friends). Ridgway asked Suitor to talk to him about something other than football.
In the past Suitor had, under similar circumstances, asked his kicker if he'd seen the latest Robert Bateman print - they're both collectors. On this day Suitor spoke of an upcoming camping trip the two had planned. He also asked whether Ridgway had noticed a rather attractive woman seated near their bench.

"I knew he was focused, I just wanted to make him smile. And he started laughing," recalls Suitor from his home in Vancouver, where he now works as a CFL commentator for TSN. "Whenever we lined up for a kick we felt we could make it - we had that kind of chemistry.



"But what's really funny is that all of a sudden we had 10 kicking coaches out there on the field. I looked over at Dave and half the huddle is circled around him giving him advice like 'keep your head down', and 'remember to follow through'. And I just told everybody to get lost - we've kicked a few of these before."
The kick, of course, was good, giving the Riders a 43-40 victory and the Grey Cup for only the second time in the history of the team.

"I remember watching it sail through the uprights and feeling like my eyes were huge," recalls Ridgway. "I think I said something like, 'oh my God, we did it!'"

Suitor was equally moved.
"I didn't know what to do with myself. You feel relieved, you feel excited - there's just a flood of emotions that hit you," he said. "We had worked so long and so hard to get to that moment. Through all the practices and all the weightlifting and all the politics, you dream of this moment. And we had

finally achieved it.
"We've always said that game, the season, the championship, was all for the fans. But that brief moment when we realized the kick was good, that was for the players because that's what we'd committed ourselves to and we'd finally done it."

Despite being called the game's hero, Ridgway is quick to share the accolades.

"Football is the epitome of a team sport," he explains. "Mine is the last piece of the puzzle, but everybody has to do their jobs equally well in order for me to succeed."
Immediately following the game, Ridgway used a national television interview to dedicate the win to the people of Saskatchewan.

"During the 80's both football and farming in Saskatchewan became synonymous with futility - there were very few people who prospered at either," says Ridgway. "Hey, we didn't solve all the world's problems or create world peace. But I think we helped the people of Saskatchewan band together and feel good about something, and they sure deserved it.

"The fans have always been there for this team."

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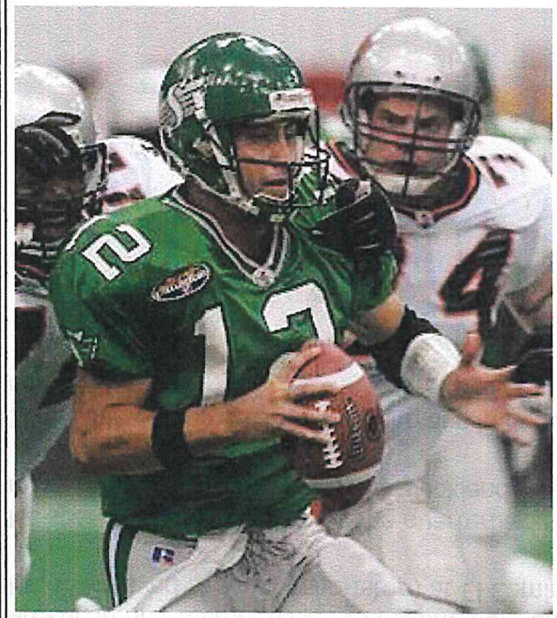
Steve Sarkisian - Quarterback - Saskatchewan Roughriders - 1997-99



Steve Sarkisian joined Saskatchewan in 1997 after starring at Brigham Young University. While at Brigham Young Steve had set and broken numerous school records. The foresight of placing Steve on the Roughriders negotiation list paid of as Steve signed on as a professional prior to the '97 season.

He dressed for 3 games as a rookie in 1997. In '98 Steve backed up Reggie Slack and saw his first professional action. In limited action, Steve completed 56.5% of his passes and threw 4 touchdowns. Steve was named the clubs starter for the '99 season and struggled. He did throw 16 touchdowns for Saskatchewan but also had 21 interceptions. After the '99 season Steve retired from professional football and moved into coaching. There were expectations for Steve as a professional considering his career in college but his professional career was ultimately unfulfilled. He lasted only 1 season in the CFL as a starter, although he had his struggles in '99 Steve ultimately decided he would rather coach than continue to learn as a CFL quarterback.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1998	Sask	92	52	604	56.5	4	4
1999	Sask	290	165	2290	56.9	14	21

DT: You played in the Canadian Football League for the Saskatchewan Roughriders. Why did you quit after just three years?
SS: I had set a goal at three years. I said I was going to take a real shot at this, and if after three years I can have a shot at getting into the NFL, I'm going to do it. But if not, I knew I always wanted to be a coach. And (getting into the NFL) didn't happen after three years.

DT: Did you know you always wanted to coach?
SS: I knew when I played that I was physically limited. But I knew that I loved the game. I got done playing in Canada, I came back to the South Bay, and became the quarterbacks coach at El Camino Junior College for coach John Featherstone. At the same time, I was selling software for an Internet based company, but I

knew what I loved.

Steve had a record-setting 2-year (1995-96) career at BYU, where he was coached by former USC assistant Norm Chow. He completed 549-of-824 passes (66.6%) for 7,755 yards and 55 TDs in his career. His 162.0 career passing efficiency rating is third on the all-time NCAA list. As a senior in 1996, he led the nation in passing efficiency (173.6, the seventh best mark ever) as the Western Athletic Conference champion Cougars went 14-1 and won the 1997 Cotton Bowl. He was the WAC Offensive Player of the Year in 1996, won All-American second team honors and played in the East-West Shrine Game and Hula Bowl. As a 1995 junior, he made the All-WAC team and led BYU to the WAC title. Against Fresno State that season, he set an NCAA game completion percentage record when he hit 31-of-34 passes (91.2%).

He came to BYU from El Camino Junior College, where he starred for 2 seasons (1993-94). He was a J.C. All-American first teamer as a 1994 sophomore and won All-Mission Conference honors in 1993 as a freshman. He also played baseball (shortstop) at El Camino in 1993.

He spent the 2004 season as the quarterbacks coach with the Oakland Raiders. His quarterbacks passed for more than 4,000 yards in 2004 as Oakland ranked eighth in passing in the NFL.

Sarkisian moved on to the USC Trojans in Feburary of 2005 as the assistant head coach and quarterbacks coach.

Saskatchewan Roughriders

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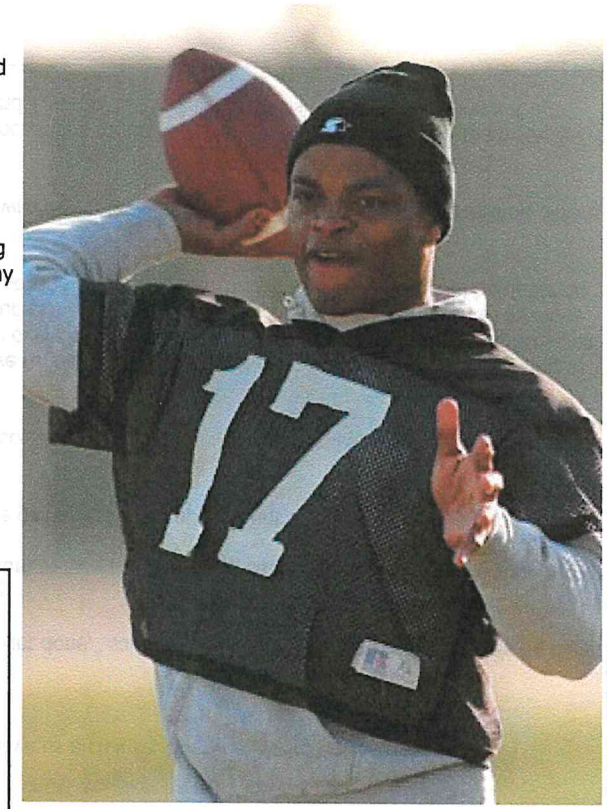
Reggie Slack - Quarterback - 1993-1999. 2002 - Auburn

With the build of a linebacker, the fleet feet of a tailback and an arm that could light up a stadium, Reggie Slack was the type of athlete who makes you stop and take notice.

Reggie was a star in college with Auburn he received honourable mention as an All-American leading the Tigers to a career 21-4 record. Drafted in the 12th round by the Houston Oilers. Slack came to the CFL in 1993 after 3 disappointing seasons with the Houston Oiler franchise. He joined Toronto with very raw ability and had some success, lingering knee issues hurt his performance late in the season but the promise of future success was visible with Reggie. In 1994 He split the season between the Argonauts and Hamilton after a mid-season trade. He had success with Hamilton with 8 passing touchdowns including a 102 yarder.



With the CFL expanding in 1995 Reggie signed with Birmingham to rekindle his former collegiate glory. The experiment did not last long and after just 3 games he joined Winnipeg. With Winnipeg Reggie really start to garner attention from across the league as a rising talent. Backing up Sammy Garza, Slack was a crowd favourite. Frequent chants of "Reggie, Reggie" could be heard at Winnipeg Stadium whenever the starter struggled.

The trend continued in 1996 with Slack frequently replacing an ineffective Kent Austin. The Blue Bombers were humiliated by Edmonton 68-7 at an icy Commonwealth Stadium in the Western semi-final. Slack mopped up for Austin but the defeat signalled an overhaul for the franchise and Slack was not in the future plans.

Reggie joined Saskatchewan as a free-agent in 1997 and enjoyed his greatest season as a professional.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	TD	Int
1993	Tor	184	104	1372	7	7
1994	T-H	218	134	1496	11	11
1995	B-W	332	177	2191	12	9
1996	Wpg	241	128	1863	10	7
1997	Ssk	326	172	2423	9	13
1998	Ssk	463	287	3721	19	16
1999	Ssk	226	126	1610	8	8
2002	Tor	155	92	1083	7	3

In the improbable run to the 1997 Grey Cup with Saskatchewan, Slack grabbed his Roughrider team by the collar, threw the team on his powerful back and carried the club to a November Grey Cup match-up with the dominant Toronto Argonauts.

In the West semi-final Saskatchewan faced the heavily favoured Calgary Stampeders. The Roughriders had lost 14 straight contests at McMahon Stadium dating back to the Western final in 1989. Slack was magnificent passing for 278 yards and a touchdown and rushing for 102 with the winning touchdown run with less than a minute remaining in the game. said Slack to Reg Curran of the Canadian Press:

"It was a huge win for us," said Slack. "Coming into this game, we felt we would have an opportunity to win if we came out and played with a lot of emotion,

and we did just that."

An injury to Calgary starter Jeff Garcia meant that rookie Dave Dickinson would have to rally the Stampeders. The rookie fell short in a gutsy performance that would foreshadow a succesful career for the young pivot.

In the Western Final Slack was just as dominant rushing for 2 key touchdowns as the Riders squeaked out a 31-30 victory to advance to the franchises first Grey Cup berth since 1989. Said Slack following the victory to the Canadian Press:

"We shocked the world," said Slack. "I don't think anybody gave us a chance. Last week nobody gave us a chance, this week we're going to the Cup."

coach Jim Daley added:

"We just knew by Reggie on the bench (between series in the fourth quarter) that it was going to get done," said Roughriders coach Jim Daley. "There's no panic in the man, there's no panic in our players."

Saskatchewan would be going to the 1997 Grey Cup hosted by Edmonton in Commonwealth Stadium to face the defending champion Toronto Argonauts.

The Riders and Slack were handily defeated by the Doug Flutie led Argonauts in the Grey Cup. The game was a disappointment after a magical run but did include a 55 yard pass and run touchdown from Slack to Mike Saunders.

Slack played two more season in Saskatchewan. the club or Slack did not enjoy a great deal of success and injuries coupled with a substance abuse problem caused Slack to leave the CFL prior to the 2000 season.

Reggie returned to the CFL with Toronto in 2002. Slack has bulked up even more and was effective running the quarterback option as well as pocket passing to Derrel Mitchell among his receivers. The Argonauts closed the season with a thrilling 33-32 victory over Calgary to edge into the playoffs. In the win, punctuated by an Antonnious Bonner interception return for a touchdown, Slack threw for 318 yards and 3 touchdowns. The Argonauts defeated Saskatchewan to advance to the Eastern Final versus the Alouettes in Montreal, Slack was forced to leave the contest in the second quarter with a concussion. Toronto would be defeated by the Alouettes in the Eastern Final.

With the signing of Damon Allen prior to the 2003 season, the career for Reggie Slack in Toronto was over. He did spend some limited time with Hamilton before retiring for good.

Reggie Slack was an incredible quarterback with amazing athletic ability. He proved on countless occasions throughout his career he could carry a team single handily to victory with his feet, his arm or his head. From Auburn to Winnipeg to Saskatchewan and Toronto, Slack delighted fans with his ability and left an impression on Canadian Football.

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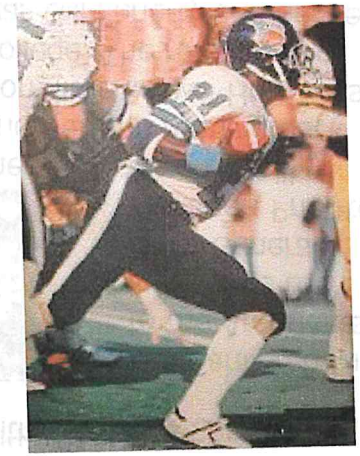
Raghib "Rocket" Ismail signed with McNall and the CFL's Toronto Argonauts for $3.5 million a year, under a personal services contract; like Wayne Gretzky, he was a speciality item, sent from one country to another to help establish one national game to the other land. Courtesy ESPN 1991 Draft. read more on the "Rocket" and his two seasons in the CFL here...



Terry Metcalf -The versatile Metcalf came to Toronto for the 1978 season. After a contract dispute with the St.Louis Cardinals, Metcalf signed a million dollar "lifetime" contract. "lifetime"

Choose an Argo

1970'S
1980'S
1990'S

Grey Cup

Index

The recruiting of Joe Theismann in 1971 out from under the Miami Dolphins by Leo Cahill and the Toronto Argonauts is a fascinating look at Canadian Football in the early 1970's. The diminutive Theismann was highly touted coming out of Notre Dame in 1970 having led the Irish to a Cotton Bowl championship. Drafted in the fourth round by Don Shula and the Miami Dolphins, Theismann became frustrated with contract negotiations, Leo Cahil saw an opportunity and pounced to lure Joe north. While Theismann lasted just 3 season with Toronto; he did lead the team to the Grey Cup game in 1971 and brought a great deal of attention to not only the Argos but the entire Canadian Football League. read the story of how Joe came to the Argos from Theismann's own words in his autobiography here...

Along with Joe Theismann, Greg Barton and Jim Stillwagon in the Argonauts recruiting spree of 1971 came the enigmatic Leon McQuay. His unrivaled talent on the football field was matched by his unpredictable temperment off the field. Quoted by Leo Cahill as "the best player he ever recruited" McQuay came out of the University of Tampa after his junior year bringing his special football talents to Toronto. His electrifying play on the field is certainly remembered by Argonaut fans. However, what is most remembered as a lasting image is McQuay's controversial fumble in the 1971 Grey Cup on the wet unforgiving turf of Empire Stadium in Vancouver. The fumble arguably cost the Argos victory that day. From a feature in the Tampa Tribune read more about Leon here...

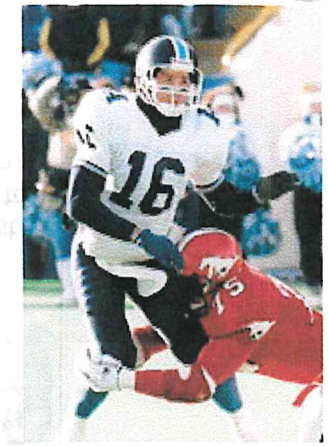
In 1976 legendary quarterback Russ Jackson began his second season as coach of the Boatmen, after a disappointing 5-10-1 record in 1975 the team was desperate to make a splash and revitalize the offence. To that end former USC standout and World League orphan Anthony Davis a star running back and 1974 Heisman runner-up was signed. Davis rebuffed an offer from the New York Jets and signed a five-year $1 million dollar lasted 3 seasons. The lone bright spot on some terrible Argo teams; Metcalf got out of his contract after the 1980 season and returned to the NFL with the Washington Redskins. Read more about Terry's tenure and history with the Argos here...

Leo Cahill returned to the Argonauts in 1986 as the clubs General Manager. Prior to the 1987 season Cahill uncovered a running back from little known Holy Cross College. The running back was Gill Fenerty and he went on to win rookie of the year honours in 1987 rushing for nearly 900 yards and 12 touchdowns. Gill 'the thrill' Fenerty played 3 season with the Argonauts before moving on to the New Orleans Saints. During his stay Fenerty electrified Argonaut fans with his explosive ability setting numerous club rushing records. read more about Gil here...

deal with the Argonauts the first million dollar man in Canadian Football. Davis arrogant demeanor clashed with Jackson and the result was a supreme disappointment on the field for the team and ultimately the fans. He left after just one forgettable season with Toronto and is remembered as one of the most profound flops in the clubs history. Read more about the recruiting and ultimate departure of Anthony here...

Doug Flutie was an Argonaut for two seasons 1996-97. His stay produced back-to-back Grey Cup Championship and one of the most dominant offensive attacks in club history. The 1984 Heisman winner parlayed his success with Toronto into a return to the NFL with the Buffalo Bills in 1998. Flutie has enjoyed a rebirth as a veteran play-caller entering his eight season down south. Although Flutie's stay in Toronto may not have produced the attendance figures the team had hoped, he definitely delivered on the field setting numerous passing records and winning his final 2 Most Outstanding Player awards in the CFL which brought his total to an astounding 6 MOP awards in 8 seasons. Read more about Doug and his dominant two season stay in Toronto here...

Terry Greer was the first player in professional football to top 2,000 yards receiving in a season. Terry eclipsed the mark in 1983 in only 16 games teaming with quarterback Conderedge Holloway to form an unstoppable tandem. The Alabama State product finished the 1983 season with 113 catches for 2,003 yards. He would finish runner-up to Edmonton's Warren Moon for Most Outstanding Player for the year. Terry Greer spent 6 spectacular seasons with the Argonauts before moving on to the National Football League in 1986. Read more about the amazing Terry Greer here...



Matt Dunigan had already established himself as a great CFL quarterback when he joined Toronto in 1990. Matt had led both Edmonton and B.C. to the Grey Cup game. It was with Toronto in 1991 however, that Dunigan truly cemented his status as a CFL legend. Suffering from a separated shoulder and with frigid conditions in Winnipeg; it was under the guidance of Dunigan that the Argonauts attained victory over Calgary to capture the 1991 Grey Cup. Read more about Matt Dunigan with the Toronto Argonauts here...

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Anthony Davis - Running Back - 1976 - University of Southern California

Running Back 5'10 190 lbs – 09-08-52 - The first million dollar man of the Canadian Football League.

Rushing				Receiving				Kickoff Returns				Punt Returns			
ATT	YDS	AVG	TD	REC	YDS	AVG	TD	No	YDS	AVG	LG	No	YDS	AVG	LG
104	417	4.8	2	37	408	11.0	2	27	701	26.0	62	5	96	19.2	28

Excerpt: HuddlingUp by Jeffrey Goodman,pg177-179,printed 1981Fitzhenry&WhitesideLtd.

Anthony Davis had an outstanding career at the University of Southern Californai and performed well in a brief fling in the World Football League. (Team owner Bill) Hodgson had told (General Manager J.I.) Albrecht that he wanted an excellent running back, "someone like Anthony Davis," to help Jackson build an offence.

"Why not Anthony Davis then?" asked Albrecht, and Hodgson encouraged him to try. Albrecht knew Davis's agent, Mike Trope, from his earlier signing of Johnny Rodgers. The NFL New York Jets, against who the Argos would be bidding, made Albrecht's task an easy one. When Davis arrived in Toronto for contract discussions, Albrecht showed him an article in that day's New York Times quoting Jets' coach Charlier Winner as saying that Davis would have to prove himself before he could start in the Jets' offensive backfield.

Money also talked of course. Davis received a $120,000 signing bonus and a five-year contract that would pay him $65,000 his first year and gradually increase to $100,000 for his last. Bonus clauses would provide a potential $30,000 a year extra. In fine Argo tradition, Davis was to become yet another costly flop. A major reason was that friction developed between Jackson and Davis and Jackson under he new setup, did not have the authority to release him.

Davis was used to offensive formations that helped make him a star elsewhere and expected Jackson to follow suit. Jackson would not budge because he was hired to make these

decisions and would not be dictated to by a player. Davis, who was used to getting his own way, would not co-operate; he knew he had an ally in Albrecht who also wanted Jackson to alter his offensive formations to suit the players, especially Davis. Davis certainly did nothing to ease the tension. In fact, he had alienated Jackson beyond the point of reconciliation on the second day of training camp, refusing to partake in running laps in the bitter, rainy cold at St.Andrews College in Aurora, Ontario.

During the final game of the 1976 regular season, in a game against the TigerCats in Hamilton, Argo quarterback Matthew Reed, desperate to find an open receiver threw an incomplete pass to Davis. When Reed returned to the Argo bench, assistance coach Joe Moss told him never to throw the ball to Davis again. But, by then, it didn't matter. The season was a write-off.

Hodgson knew that changes had to be made again. Davis made that somewhat easy by asking Hodgson to release him. Hodgson refused and said he would have to honour his contractual obligations, even if it meant serving as team waterboy. Davis came back and offered to buy his way out. Hodgson demanded that Davis repay all the signing bonus money he had received. Davis agreed, and fled the scene of a disaster he was instrumental in creating.

-Excerpt from Toronto Argonauts Media Guide 1976-

Davis played for the Southern California Sun of the now defunct World Football League in 1975 and led the W.F.L. in rushing with 1,200 yards on 239 carries and scoring 16 touchdowns at the time of its demise. As a receiver he caught 40 passes for 381 yards and one touchdown while on kick-off return, he ran back nine for 235 yards and one major score. In all, he scored 18 in the W.F.L. for 133 points.

His 16 touchdowns for rushing over 12 games is a W.F.L. record. As a diversion, he also played the role of passer on occasion and completed 4 of 11 attempts for 102 yards and one touchdown.

In his senior year (1974) he was a unanimous All-American selection for a third time winning national acclamation in his junior and sophomore years. Davis was also an All-Coast All-Star for three season in the Pacific Eight Conference and finished second in the voting for the coveted national Heisman Trophy in his final year. In 1974, he lifted his team from a 24-7 halftime defecit to defeat Notre Dame 55-24 including scoring on a 102-yard kickoff return. He was also the first west coast player to rush for more than 1,000 yards in three consecutive seasons – 1,191 in 1972; 1,112 in 1973 and 1,469 in 1974. In all he carried the ball 784 time in league play for 3,772 yards

and 44 touchdowns.
He was a second round choice of the N.F.L. New York Jets in the 1975 draft.

A native of Dallas, Texas, Davis has appeared in movies and television documentaries as well as doing commercials. He has been a model for men's fashions. During his college football career he appeared on the cover of Sports Illustrated three times.
A connoisseur of vintage automobiles, Davis has two Rolls Royces and two restored Cadillacs.

ANTHONY DAVIS
HOF: When you went to the Toronto Argonauts what was the situation?
AD: They were too happy to have me. I was getting acclimated to the system. I held the kickoff return yardage record for them- and I missed the last six games of the year. It wasn't conducive to my ability. In fact it was so bad up there, that a guy named J.I. Albrecht, the personal manager for the Patriots, complained to the owner of the team. There was a guy named Russ Jackson, who was supposed to be one of the best players in Canadian football - so you're dealing with that reputation. I was called an "import", the "pompous american"- the first guy to sign a million dollar CFL contract, so they had a problem with me anyway. And then there is the quota system up there, 15 Canadians and 17 Americans. The city was great. The football was disgusting. When I got hurt, that was the downfall of my career. That's why I got out of football. I hurt my back and never should've played, waited and got healthy. I should've sat out a year.

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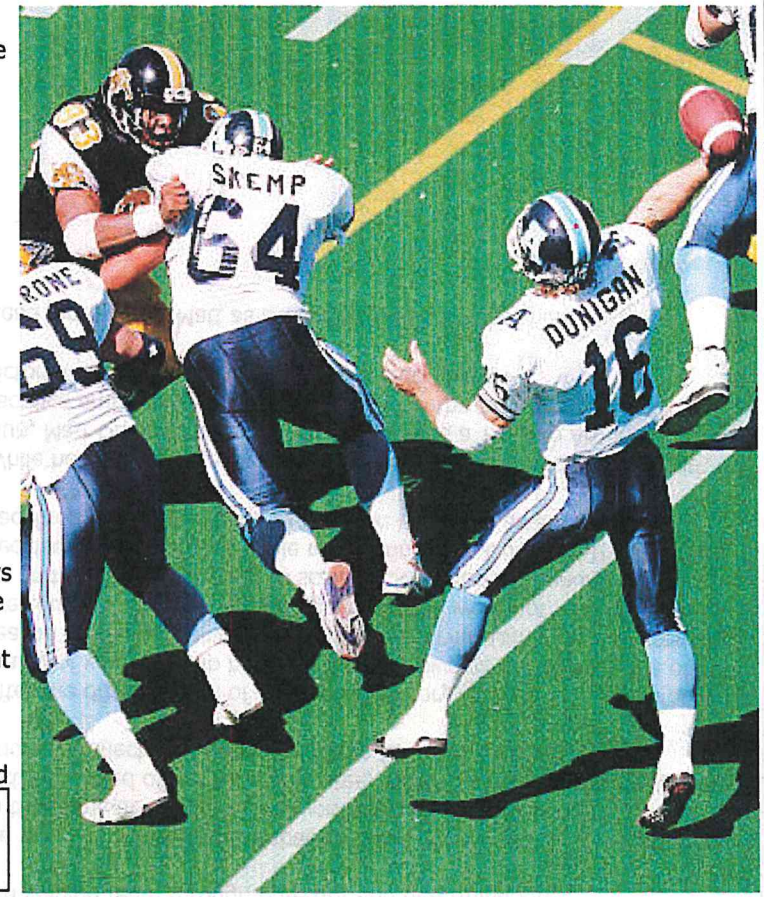
Matt Dunigan - Quarterback - 1990-91 - Louisiana Tech

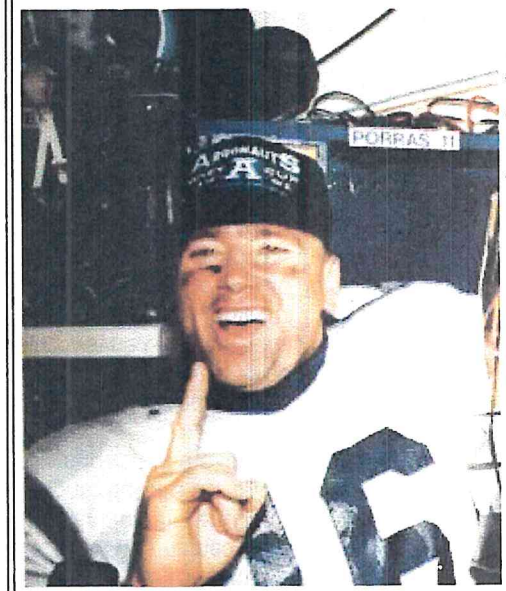


Matt Dunigan joined the Toronto Argonauts in 1990. Under new head coach Don Matthews the Argonauts had an outstanding season on offence. Dunigan led the offence for 8 games but missed 10 due to injury. The team average 38.8 points in the revamped Matthews offence. Rickey Foggie started in place of the injured Dunigan for 10 games in 1990 and sophomore running back Michael "Pinball" Clemons set the league record for combined yards over 3,300. Clemons was named the leagues Most Outstanding Player. Dunigan was the toast of Toronto despite the injuries throwing 17 touchdowns in the limited action.

Dunigan returned in 1991 under the new ownership regime of Bruce McNall, John Candy and Wayne Gretzky. It was a dream season in Toronto with the arrival of Notre Dame superstar Raghib "Rocket" Ismail. Don Matthews was replaced as head coach with Adam Rita the teams offensive co-ordinator in 1990. The Argonauts averaged over 38,000 fans a game at Skydome with all the glitz and glamour of Hollywood star power included. Dunigan suffered through a variety of injuries again in '91 limited to just 8 games yet again. He passed for 2,011 yards on the year but Dunigan's true value would come in the playoffs. In front of a sell-out crowd for the Eastern Final of over 51,000 at Skydome Toronto trounced Winnipeg 42-3. Dunigan suffered a separated shoulder in the game throwing 2 touchdowns and his status for the Grey Cup the following weekend in frigid Winnipeg versus Danny Barrett and the Calgary Stampeders was not certain.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1990	Tor	262	144	2028	55.0	17	14
1991	Tor	196	121	2011	61.7	16	10

Truly part of Grey Cup lore, the story continues that while in Winnipeg for Grey Cup week at the hotel the Argonauts were staying, the teams coaches including Adam Rita had Dunigan throw passes in the Hotel ballroom to test the injury. The result was positive as Dunigan was a surprise starter with the shoulder frozen, and re-frozen at half time for the coldest Grey Cup in history. Toronto was victorious 36-21 over Calgary with Dunigan as the unquestionable leader of the team throwing two touchdowns and leading team through pure grit and determination.



He was the greatest quarterback in the Country and the greatest leader in the game at the time. The work ethic and all-out commitment for victory rubbed off on his teammates; Clemons, Ismail, Masotti, Chomyc and was reflected in their admiration for him as a leader.

After the dizzying high of a Grey Cup victory and a dream season the reality of what the trip had cost the new owners hit home in the off-season and specifically salary negotiations with Dunigan. Promises made previously to Dunigan regarding a new deal were not followed through on and the Argo's, looking to scale back the lavish spending of 1991, decided to play hardball while negotiating with Dunigan. The decision backfired and Matt left the club to join Winnipeg as a free agent.

While he only manage 16 regular season games in two seasons with the club, Matt Dunigan certainly left his mark as a Toronto Argonaut. The sacrifice and resolve shown by Dunigan in the Argonauts 1991 Grey Cup victory lasts as a defining moment in club history.

Read more about Matt as a Winnipeg Blue Bomber here...

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Gil Fenerty - Running Back - 1987-89 - Holy Cross College

Running Back 6'0 195 lbs–24-08-63- **courtesy-CraigWallace-ArgoHeroesLeoCahill-TorontoArgonautWebpage**

In 1987, Leo signed the most exciting running back the Argos had had since Bill Symons was in his prime during the late 1960's. His name was Gill (The Thrill) Fenerty. Fenerty was the greatest running back in the history of Holy Cross University and had somehow been overlooked by the NFL. He had gone to Europe and was playing in Italy when Leo tracked him down. Fenerty simply exploded in Toronto...rushing for nearly 900 yards, scoring 15 touchdowns and was named the CFL Rookie of the Year. He was helped by the addition of two exciting young quarterbacks who again had been signed by Leo...John Congemi and Gilbert Renfroe.

	Rushing					Receiving				
Year	Att	Yards	Avg.	Lg	TD	No	Yds	Avg	Lg	TD
1987	178	879	4.9	60	12	53	456	8.6	34	3
1988	202	968	4.8	27	10	51	443	8.7	21	2
1989	245	1247	5.1	60	10	36	291	8.1	37	2

The Argos improved their regular season record in 1987 finishing 11-7. Their offense was explosive and their defense was as always...very tough, and aggressive. The Argos defeated Hamilton and Winnipeg in the playoffs and headed to Vancouver to take on the Edmonton Eskimos in the Grey Cup. This Championship game was considered by many experts, among the finest ever played. Fenerty played spectacularly, scoring one touchdown on a short plunge into the end zone and then sprinting out of the backfield to haul in a bomb from Gilbert Renfroe and take that all the way for another major. The lead changed hands numerous times and the game wasn't settled until the Eskimo's Jerry Kauric kicked a last minute field

goal to give Edmonton a 38-36 victory.

It had been a wonderful year for Leo and the Argos but Leo was still disappointed. He desperately wanted a Grey Cup championship and still didn't have it. With Fenerty running wild and rushing for 968 yards in 1988 the Argonauts flattened the Eastern Conference finishing with a record of 14-4. Their season however came to a stunning end as Winnipeg upset them in the Eastern final.

continued by CFL-H- In 1989 Gill's last year with the Argonauts he enjoyed his finest season. Setting a club record for rushing yards that would stand for 12 season Fenerty rumbled for 1,247 yards on the ground. He scored 12 touchdowns leading the offence and being named to his third consecutive All-Eastern All-Star selection. Toronto finished the season 7-11 but made the playoffs only to lose to Winnipeg for a second straight season in the post-season this time in the Eastern Semi-final.

Following the 1989 season Fenerty signed with the New Orleans Saints, used primarily as a returner and reserve running back Fenerty enjoyed 2 successful seasons with the Saints before retiring. Gill Fenerty has been immortalized as one if the premiere return men in the cult Nintendo Entertainment System classic Tecmo Super Bowl.

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Doug Flutie - Quarterback - 1997-98 - Boston College

Doug had enjoyed 6 outstanding seasons in the CFL's Western division with British Columbia and Calgary when the financial difficulties of Stampeders owner Larry Ryckman started to adversely affect Flutie and the lifetime contract he had signed with Calgary. Ryckman's financial troubles had started prior to the 1996 season in which Flutie had had surgery on his elbow the only major injury of his CFL career. Doug played essentially for free as creditors closed in on Ryckman in 1996.

Disillusioned by the whole scene and looking for a new start Flutie signed with the Argonauts, the new look Argonauts who underwent a complete overhaul from the dissapointing 1996 team that finished a dismal 4-14. The Argonauts brought in Don Matthews to lead the revitalized team along with a boatload of talent to surround Flutie including Tyrone Williams, Tim Cofield, and Robert Drummond. Matthews also revitalized Mike "Pinball" Clemons by moving him to slotback. The club opened the season with a stunning last drive comeback victory over Montreal at Olympic Stadium and the trend was set for a season of big plays and excitement.

Year	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	Int	TD	LG
1996	677	434	5720	64.1	17	29	97
1997	673	430	5505	63.9	15	47	87

On July 4, 1996 Flutie would have his last battle with long-time rival Matt Dunigan. Dunigan had moved to the Tiger-Cats prior to the season and expectations were high in Southern Ontario for both teams. Dunigan would go on to suffer a season ending concussion in the 6th game of the season and be forced to retire. On that night the Argos home opener 26,333 the largest Argo crowd of the season witnessed an offensive showcase as the quarterback's combined for nearly 800 yards through the air and 9 passing touchdowns. Dunigan's Ti-Cats would be triumphant in a 38-36 nail-biter as new Argo kicker Mike Vanderjagt missed the possible tying field goal as time expired. The match was one for the ages and a fitting close to the 7 season the two had clashed as the premiere pivots in the league.

The Argo's finished 15-3 in 1996 their best win total in their history. Flutie was as advertised passing for 4,720 yards and 29 touchdowns. He was the face of the team and although the crowds were not what team brass envisioned when they signed Doug, the fans who were in attendance were definitely entertained. Toronto went on to defeat the Montreal Alouettes in the Eastern Final and in a Classic Grey Cup game dubbed the "Snow Bowl" the Flutie led Argo's edged Danny McManus, Ron Lancaster and the Edmonton Eskimos 43-37 for their

2nd Grey Cup of the decade. The game featured return touchdowns for James "the Jet" Cunningham for Toronto and a 91-yard kickoff return for a touchdown by the legendary Henry "Gizmo" Williams. Mike Vanderjagt hit four field goals for Toronto and controversial non-fumble by Flutie were the factors in the Argo victory. Flutie capped the season winning his 5th Most Outstanding Player Award.

The whole gang returned for 1997 and produced an identical 15-3 record. Flutie set a club record for passing touchdowns with 47 and threw for 5,505 yards. Doug mastered the offence and called his own plays under offensive co-ordinator John Jenkins. Robert Drummond was dominant in the running attack and only a late season injury prevented Drummond from becoming the only player to total over 1,000 yard rushing and receiving in a season, he finished with 1,134 and 806 respectively. Derrel Mitchell was added to the offensive mix and as a rookie caught 1,457 yards and 17 touchdowns to be named rookie of the year. Toronto once again edged out Montreal in the Eastern final at Skydome as Flutie hit Pinball Clemons for the winning touchdown pass within the last minute. Over 30,000 fans witnessed the gripping Eastern Final and wished the club well as they went on to Edmonton to face the surprising Saskatchewan Rough riders who led by Reggie Slack has upset both Calgary and Edmonton to make it to the final. Toronto easily handled Saskatchewan 47-23 to become the only team since the five-in-a-row Edmonton Eskimos to win consecutive Grey Cups. Flutie also won his 6th and final Most Outstanding Player award for the 1997 season.

After the 1997 season Flutie had accomplished everything in the Canadian game. The questions of his ability to win the big game when he came to Toronto were eliminated with back-to-back Grey Cup victories. Looking for a new challenge, Flutie turned his sights back to the NFL, with his agent Jack Mula, Flutie signed a free agent contract with the Buffalo Bills for the 1998 season. He started the season as back-up to Rob Johnson but injuries and ineffective play by Johnson had Flutie starting by mid-season and his flair for dramatics returned to the beloved figure he had been in college. Flutie signed a free-agent contract with the defending Super Bowl champion New England Patriots in 2005 he returned home for his 8th NFL season since his return to the NFL in 1998. It is a fitting place for Flutie to end his storybook (if not vagabond) pro football career, but he will be quick to tell those who ask that the most fun he had in football was calling his own plays for the 97-98 Argo's.
Doug Flutie announced his retirement from professional football on May 15, 2006 he has agreed to join ABC as a college football analyst.

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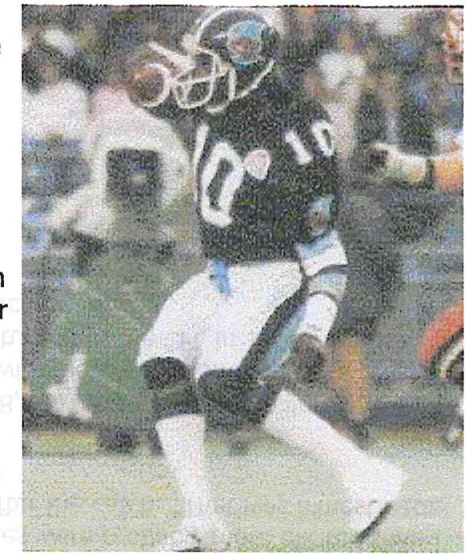
Terry Greer - Wide Receiver - 1980-85 - Alabama State University

By Rob Malich - Toronto Argonauts website - 1996



In 1983, a new Canadian sports magazine named MVP came out, and on the cover of its first-ever edition, there was a picture of Terry Greer balancing a football on the end of his finger.

When going through a list of Canadian sports heroes in the 1980's, many would have come before Greer and therefore warranted cover status on the historic first copy, names such as Gretzky, Bossy and Podborski, among others. But the year that the Argo receiver had in 1983 warranted some special status, and proved that the editors of the magazine, which lasted some five years, had made a wise decision.

Greer was the first receiver in professional football history to go over 2,000 yards that year, finishing with 2,003 yards on 113 catches. It's a mark that ranks with O.J. Simpson's smashing of the 2,000 yard rushing barrier and Warren Moon's shattering of the 5,000 yard passing mark. Unfortunately for Greer, Moon beat his own passing record that same year, and ended up with the league MVP award ahead of Greer.

Yr	No	Yds	Avg.	LG	TD
1980	37	552	14.9	39	2
1981	21	284	13.5	45	3
1982	85	1466	17.2	61	11
1983	113	2003	17.7	72	8
1984	70	1189	17.0	61	14
1985	78	1323	18.1	105	9

"Yeah, it was a little disappointing, but losing to a great player like Warren Moon isn't too bad," said Greer. "I kind of felt they would give it to him anyway."

Apart from losing the Schenley Award, 1983 was everything a player could dream of, culminating in a Grey Cup championship along with all the records.

"To have a great year and not to win, it doesn't make it the same," said Greer, who admits the records sort of caught up to him by accident. "Everything just kind of happened in stages. There

were three big games in a row, and all of a sudden, I was ahead of everybody."

By the end of the 16-game season, Greer was in reach of three different milestones: the league reception record held by Brian Kelly, the league yardage record held by Hal Patterson, and the elusive 2,000 yard plateau.

"I remember one game vs. Ottawa, (then Argo play-by-play announcer) Bob Bratina called down to the bench and said I was only one catch short of the record," said Greer, who then caught a quick hitch pass from quarterback Condredge Holloway for the reception record.

The next week, Greer passed Patterson's record of 1,914 yards, which stood since 1956, in the first half. "Then somebody said at halftime, all I needed was eight yards for going over 2,000," said Greer, who then caught an 11-yard quick out from Holloway to go over the mark.

"It hadn't dawned on me what I was achieving; my teammates were probably more excited than I was," said Greer, who was saluted and carried off the field after the catch. "That was almost better than the record itself."

Greer had other records with the Argos, for career yardage (8,144) and single game yards (246). He left the Boatmen in 1986 for a five year stint in the NFL, with Cleveland, San Francisco (where he won Super Bowl rings in 1988 and '89) and Detroit. He returned to the CFL in 1996 with the arch-rival Hamilton Tiger-Cats, to serve as their receivers coach.

Toronto Argonauts

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Toronto
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Ottawa
Montreal

West:
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Saskatchewan
Calgary
British Columbia
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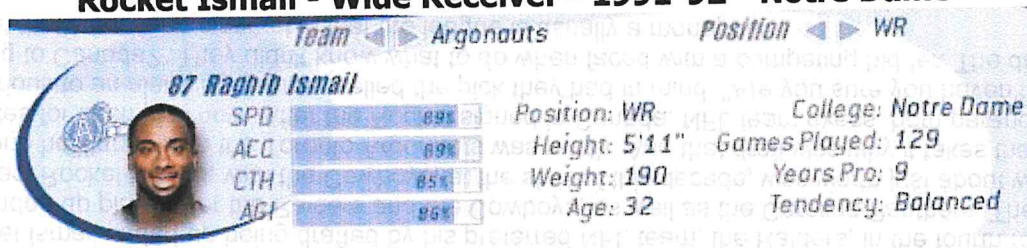
Rocket Ismail - Wide Receiver - 1991-92 - Notre Dame



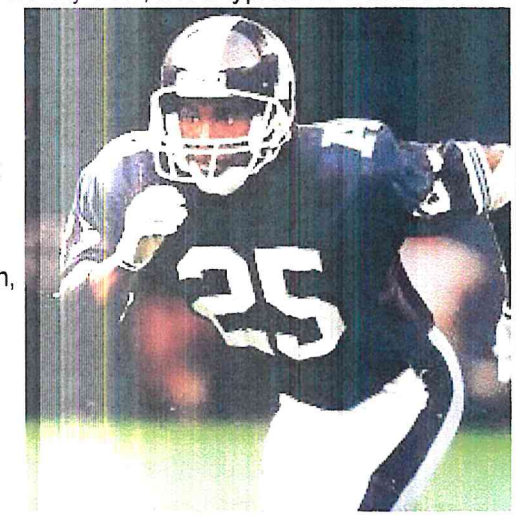
	Rushing			Receiving			Punt Returns				Kickoff Returns			
Year	ATT	YDS	TD	REC	YDS	TD	Ret	YDS	AVG	TD	Ret	YDS	AVG	TD
1991	36	271	3	64	1,300	9	48	602	12.5	1	31	786	25.4	0
1992	34	154	3	36	651	4	59	614	10.4	-	43	1,139	26.5	-

Rocket comes to Canada 1991 - CFL - courtesy ESPN website:

In '91, the consensus No. 1 pick was one Raghib "Rocket" Ismail, Heisman Trophy runner-up in 1990 to Ty Detmer of BYU. These are the ways to get people to like a protagonist: 1) give him extraordinary abilities; 2) make him likeable and pocket-sized; 3) have him endure underserved misfortune. Rocket didn't get the Heisman after what he did, which was to carry Notre Dame's offense and special teams at 5-10, 170 pounds. After he lost the Heisman, he also ran back a punt 91 yards for an apparent score on the penultimate play of that season's Orange Bowl national championship game, but the play was called back on a phantom clipping call.

But, as far as the NFL Draft was concerned, the fact it had happened couldn't be called back out of people's heads and memory. People would subconsciously get all that and that it would counterbalance the fact he'd gone to Notre Dame - some people would love him for that fact, and some would hate him for it - and had an Islamic name at the height of Desert Storm. I knew something about this, having met Rocket and done an acceptable story on him, Notre Dame and his family, as a 1989 cover story for Sports Illustrated. Later, when the Notre Dame press guide came out, in the thumbnail player bios under "Person You Most Admire," Raghib said, "Ralph Wiley, Sports Illustrated. Later, after the Orange Bowl, when he called me and said, "My family is destitute. I need to go pro. Will you help me?" I wrestled with it for about two seconds. By then I had the

expertise. Team Rocket was devised to get the Rocket a worthy deal, not a typical NFL deal at the time, for a total of less than 3 percent of the contract price. At the time, Jerry Rice, the best position player in the league, was making about $790,000 a year. What could a rookie wide receiver who was projected as a 'tweener and who was "not a quarterback" expect? What could he expect from the New England Patriots, owners of the to pick, who were playing on artificial turf, and not anything like the current model in any way, shape or form, up and down the line?



Well, we knew Sam Jankovich was a first-year GM with the Patriots, and a former AD at Miami, where he'd brought in Jimmy Johnson, who was now beginning his glory years with the Cowboys, with Jerry Jones, a man who didn't mind paying the talent -- suffice it to say, we knew where Sam would trade the pick once we forced it. But then another wild card named Bruce McNall came into the mix, having bit hard on the A&P. SI had done a story on the construction of Team Rocket before the draft. There were more strategy meetings and low-profile visits. Rocket signed with McNall and the CFL's Toronto Argonauts for $3.5 million a year, under a personal services contract; like Wayne Gretzky, he was a speciality item, sent from one country to another to help establish one national game to the other land.

Rocket Ismail ended up being drafted by his preferred NFL team, the Raiders, in the fourth round. He ended up playing for the Raiders and the Cowboys, as well as the Carolina Panthers. The final contract Rocket signed, with the Cowboys, at the start of this decade, was worth just about what the first one he signed with the Toronto Argonauts was worth. And that draft was why it takes the full 15 minutes for each pick now. After the Rocket signed in Canada, NFL team execs, both paranoid and imperious to an alarming degree, called the pick they had in mind, "Are you sure you haven't been talking to Canada?" They didn't know what to do when faced with a competing bidder. The dirty little secret that's not such a secret is that the league is usually a monopoly.

When Rocket asked me, "I'm coming out. Can you help me?" I thought about it, I thought about my protective little cocoon of "journalism," how much I liked and admired him and his brothers Qadry and Sulaiman, and how they were living in abject poverty, and how much I knew about the machinations of the NFL, and I said, "Yes, I can help you." So I did.

The scenario? It was worth a book. It came down to both days of the 1991 draft. After Rocket had signed in Canada on the day of the draft, sort of deflating and enervating the NFL proceedings, a guy named Fred Edelstein said at the time Rock would "rue the day!" he spurned the NFL. If anybody was going to do any rueing, it would be Edelstein, not Ismail. One of my occasional sources and friendly acquaintances, Leigh Steinberg, was sitting at home in the Bay Area with the two guys who became the No. 1 and 2 picks, Miami tackle Russell Maryland, who went to Dallas, and safety Eric Turner, who went second to Cleveland.

Leigh said something about how American football players should stay in America as his two clients sat there stoically, with their necks spilling over their white shirt collars like biscuit dough. ESPN's Mark Schwarz, I believe, then asked, "But both these guys put together are going to get about half of what the Rocket's getting." And both of those massive bull necks cracked to the side at the same time ... Leigh chuckled and said, "You've put quite a hurdle in front of me." I sat on a bed somewhere and laughed and put my fist threw a straw boater.

Talk about heady times. Rocket got his. Free agency came in behind him.

Cowboys' Ismail prefers to fly out of radar range Courtesy - Jean-Jacques Taylor Dallas Morning News

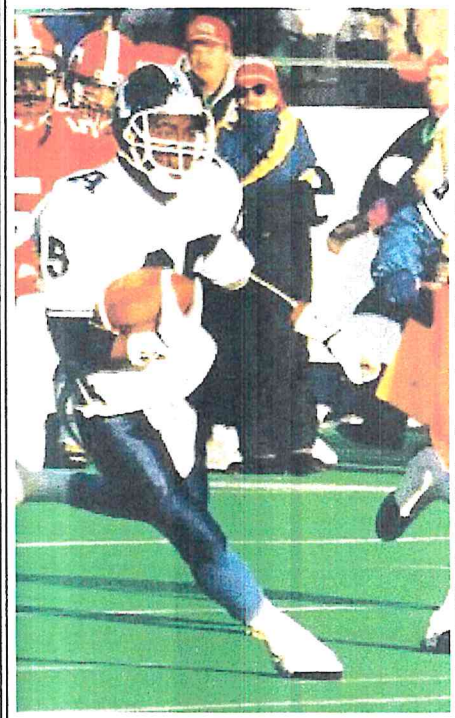
IRVING, Texas — Raghib Ramadan Ibrahim Hama Sulaiman Iben Ismail has never been an ordinary guy. On or off the football field.You see, Ismail dances to a melody only he can hear. That's why some call him quirky, others strange. Ismail, a devout Christian, is an introspective man who used to spend his off-seasons sitting on his mother's front porch in Mountaintop, Pa., gently rocking back-and-forth for weeks at a time.

The Rocket — a nickname given to him by a track coach and enhanced by his exploits on the football field — signed a seven-year, $21 million contract with the Cowboys in the off-season. The Rocket debuted with the best game of his career — eight catches, 149 yards and the game-winning touchdown — in the Cowboys' thrilling 41-35 overtime win over Washington. Through six games, he has a team-high 30 catches for 526 yards and three touchdowns. He signed with Dallas because he just wanted to be one of the guys. With Troy Aikman, Emmitt Smith, Michael Irvin and Deion Sanders around, he could do that.

At Notre Dame the Rocket became one of the most electrifying players in school history. He averaged 61.8 yards per touchdown and became the first player in NCAA history to return two kickoffs for touchdowns in two separate games. “The best Notre Dame football player ever was Paul Hornung,” said Roger Valdissari, who spent nearly 38 years working in Notre Dame's athletic department. “He played fullback, quarterback, defense, kicked extra points and punted. “But as far as pure excitement, Rocket was the man. Rocket had a flair about him and because he was so

small, people really pulled for him." Ismail and his mother shared a close relationship with Valdissari. He frequently used Valdissari's office as a haven. They talked about academics. And football. And religion. And politics.
"I just love the kid. I could have taken him home and adopted him," Valdissari said. "I don't know if he ever had down day." Ismail, though, didn't have the typical collegiate experience. The Rocket wouldn't let him. As a freshman in 1988, The Rocket led the nation in kickoff returns with a 36.1-yard average and two touchdowns as the Fighting Irish won the national championship. The attention only increased the next two years.

Students and professors asked for autographs and other memorabilia. After games, hundreds would wait at Notre Dame's dressing room door for a glimpse of Ismail. They just wanted to pat him on the back. Or shake his hand. Or snap a picture. "In four years, I played with a lot of great athletes like Tim Brown and Jerome Bettis," St. Louis cornerback Todd Lyght said of his Notre Dame career. "But there's only one name I heard the people chanting in the stands, and that was Rocket's."



Raghib Ismail never wanted to be the CFL's savior. He simply wanted to play football and build his mother a house. But the CFL had financial problems, and the Toronto Argonauts new owner Bruce McNall and his partners, comedian John Candy and hockey superstar Wayne Gretzky, wanted to make a splash. McNall had done the same thing when he bought the Los Angeles Kings and immediately traded for Gretzky. The Rocket became the highest-profile college player to join the CFL when McNall signed him to a four-year personal-services contract and a one-year contract with Toronto with a one-year option.

The Rocket was ready for the CFL. Ismail wasn't.

The Rocket gave the CFL instant credibility because he was recognized as college football's most charismatic player. And its best. But the contract Ismail signed also called for him to make personal appearances for the team, the CFL and corporate sponsors. "He was just a baby," said former Toronto general manager Mike McCarthy, "and we put him in the limelight."

The stress of being a savior took its toll on Ismail. One day, Qadry Ismail saw its effects. "His whole back was covered with stress bumps," Qadry Ismail said. ... It was too much for my brother to handle." Equipment manager Danny Webb, who has been with the Argonauts for 15 seasons, said Ismail never adjusted to The Rocket's fame. Webb recalls The Rocket taking off his equipment after open practices. As his teammates would sign autographs, Ismail would slip on a trainer's shirt and sneak away unnoticed. But on the field and in the financial ledgers, The Rocket was everything the league had hoped for.

McCarthy said Toronto's average attendance jumped from 21,000 in 1990 to 38,000 in 1991, when The Rocket became the second player in CFL history to gain more than 3,000 yards in total offense. In the Grey Cup, The Rocket returned a kickoff 87 yards for a touchdown and was named the game's MVP. "It was like a traveling circus. It was like barnstorming with Red Grange in '30s," McCarthy said. "All of the TV ratings went up, and everywhere we went was a sellout or the best house of the year." The Rocket's fame, though, suffocated Ismail.

He left the CFL after his second season to join the Los Angeles Raiders.

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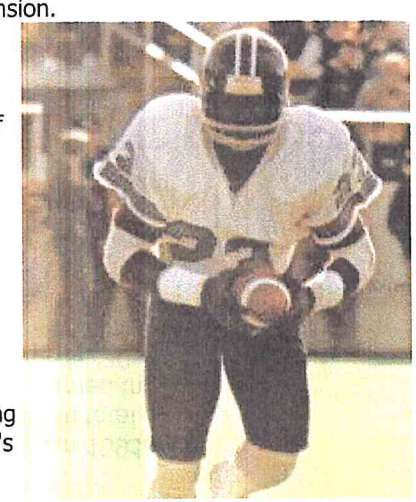
CFL Home

Leon McQuay -1971-73, 77 - University of Tampa

Tampa Tribune

Rushing				
Year	Att	Yds	Avg.	Td
1971	138	977	7.1	5
1972	148	745	5.0	2
1973	21	80	3.8	0
1976	76	307	4.0	0

Sensational. Phenomenal.
Words used to describe the extraordinary rise with thoughts of the talent that was Leon McQuay, a rare blend of speed, grace and power whose ability on the field magnified his personality off it.
Tempestuous. Moody. These words also described McQuay whose 14-year career was dotted with controversy. Former NFL quarterback Joe Theismann learned what former University of Tampa coach Fran Curci knew, McQuay's running style was quick and elusive.
"He was a phenomenal athlete," said Theismann, who was quarterback for the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League in the early 1970s. "He had a unique running style. He didn't lift his feet more than two inches off the ground. "You felt he could do that on water or grass, it wouldn't have mattered." Theismann was first impressed with McQuay when the Argonauts played game in Montreal.
"We were on our own 25 and we ran a quick trap up the middle," Theismann recalled. "There was a slight hole and Leon popped through it. He sprinted 85 yards (the Canadian field is 110 yards) for the touchdown. "I'll never forget that - his speed and quickness. He was a little like Walter Payton with the slight hesitation and the flare." Both celebrated and vilified as one of the CFL's top backs, McQuay rushed for more than 1,600 in two years and led the Argonauts to the Grey Cup (championship game) in 1971. But the love affair with "All the Way" McQuay ended in his second year when the Argonauts finished a disappointing 3-11 and the former Blake High superstar was at the center of team dissension.



The complaint against him was that he was afforded preferential treatment and missed practices. Playing for a new coach in 1973, McQuay was suspended for insubordination.
"All of us in the CFL were like castoffs. We were a bunch of misfits trying to achieve stardom," Theismann said. "We were destined to go on to the NFL. We had ambitions of wanting to come back." McQuay finally made his way into the NFL in 1974, but after stints with the New York Giants, New England, Oakland and New Orleans, mostly as a kick return specialist, McQuay became disenchanted with his role.
That didn't surprise Curci, who recruited McQuay out of then all-black Blake High after only one season as a running back. He was the first black to sign a scholarship to University of Tampa and became the foundation of a program that would gain national recognition from 1969 to 1974. "Leon was a project," said Curci who coached the McQuay-led Spartans to the small college No. 1 national ranking in 1970. "He wanted a lot of attention and [threatened] to quit the team several times. "One time he didn't show up for practice and I went to his house to get him. Turns out he was afraid of flying and we were headed to our first game out in California." More than the tension McQuay's presence created, Curci remembers the athlete.

"What a sensational athlete. There was no one more explosive than Leon," said Curci, who left UT after two seasons to coach at Miami. "He never made a mistake on the football field. Never." Curci's departure left McQuay insecure in his position at UT, he said. And that led to McQuay's decision to leave Tampa after his junior year and after rushing for 1,212 yards, 22 touchdowns and more than 3,039 in his college career.
"I left and that's why he left," Curci said. "He would come and visit me in Miami every time he had a few days off. I was like a father to him."" Mentor or father, it was Curci who eulogized McQuay in 1995. The two-time all-American who spent his last years as a minister, barber and mechanic, died of heart failure at age 45.
Said Theismann: "He was one of those people you just watched and asked 'How'd he do that?' "

excerpted - By Rob Malich - Toronto Argonauts website - 1996

While the Argos made it to the title game for the first time in 19 years (in 1971), one nightmare play has haunted the team ever since, so it's good to get it out of the way first. Of course, we are talking about running back Leon McQuay's fumble late in the game on the Calgary six-yard line, with the score 14-11 in the Stampeders' favour. As coach Leo Cahill would later say, "Leon slipped, and I fell!", and it was apropos, as the coach was let go after the disastrous 1972 season that followed.

For McQuay, he will unfortunately always be remembered for that play, despite the fact he was one of the best running backs to ever play in a Double Blue uniform.

But sports isn't always fair, just like in life, and McQuay seemed to be a victim on both ends. After moving back to his native Florida to become a minister, he died suddenly last year (1995) at the tender age of 45.

"In all the years I've been watching and playing football, he was the most talented halfback I've ever seen," said Cranmer, who lined up to the side of him at slotback. "25 years ago, he ran a 4.3 (second) 40 (yards), and that was just unheard of."

A prized recruit out of the University of Tampa in 1971, McQuay was on the way to smashing every Argo rushing record before a knee injury slowed him down late in the year. Nevertheless, he finished with 977 yards on 138 carries for a 7.1 yard average and the Eastern nominee for the Schenley most valuable player award.

"I don't think I've ever seen a guy who could go up into the line of scrimmage, then go to the right at full speed, just like that," said Peter Martin, who was the radio voice of the Argos for almost two decades. "He could really run, but he was kind of wacky in a way. You didn't know which Leon McQuay was going to show up."

In 1972, the Argos slumped to a 3-11 record, and so did Leon, to 745 yards on 148 carries. The next year, McQuay was sent out west to Calgary in a trade, but returned for a final time with the Argos in 1977, where he gained 307 yards on 76 carries. McQuay, like the team itself, sadly never realized his full potential, in football and in life

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CFL Home

Terry Metcalf - Running Back - 1978-80 - Long Beach State

	Rushing				Receiving			
Year	Att	Yds	Avg	TD	No	Yds	Avg	TD
1978	169	669	4.0	4	31	269	8.7	1
1979	141	691	4.9	2	55	568	10.3	5
1980	140	554	4.0	4	51	417	8.2	1

'Sweet Feet' Metcalf not sour on Argo experience

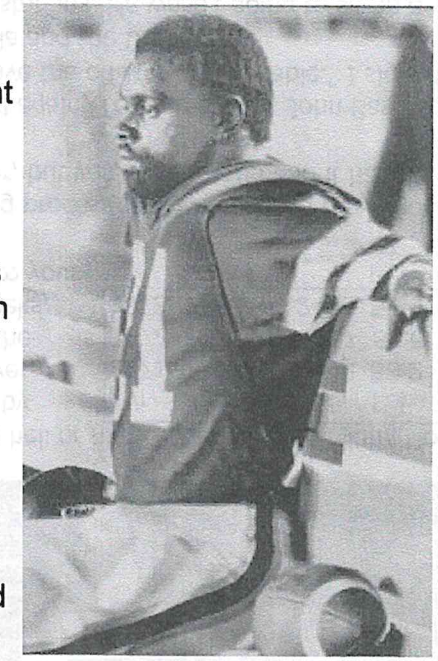
Toronto Star Nov 21,2000. By George Gamester

Once, in the jungles of New Guinea, a plane crashed with a cargo of precious goods which stone age natives saw as gifts from the gods. Foor decades thereafter, tribesman kept a mountaintop vigil – patiently searching the skies for another miracle.

Anthropoligists call these gatherings cargo cults. In Toronto, we call them Argo fans. Oh, sure. Once every few decades, fate may drop us a Flutie. But mostly we've received disappointments: Anthony Davis, Billy (White Shoes) Johnson, Wonderful Monds, Flashy guys who excelled elsewhere but never here. Which brings us to the most puzzling false god of them all: Terry (Sweet Feet) Metcalf. Now there was a star. For three seasons with the St.Louis Cardinals of the NFL he was known as "The Franchise" – an electrifying running back who set records with more than 2,000 net yards in three consecutive seasons. So it was considered quite a coup when the Argos lured him here in 1978 with a CFL record $1.5 million "lifetime: contract. In his first game he looked to be worth it. While 50,000 spectators at Exhibition Stadium chanted TER-RY, TER-RY, the nible 5-foot-10, 185 pounder twirled, sprinted and slashed his way to 297 yards and two touchdowns in an exciting season-opening victory over the hated Hamilton Tiger-Cats. A taste of triumph to come? Ha! Just a teaser before the Argo curse kicked in.

In three Argo seasons, Sweet Feet's longest gain from scrimmage was 30 yards while his

average carry was 4.3 yards. Definitely not superstar numbers. But not his fault. In those three seasons, the Argos had three coaches (Leo Cahill, Forrest Gregg and Willie Wood), and a hopeless offensive line. In football, you cannot be a savior without a competent supporting cast. After a trio of last place finishes, the discouraged 29 year-old figured he'd served his "lifetime" with the Argos. By mutual agreement, he jumped to the Washington Redskins where he had one so-so season before fading from sight.Later his name moved from sports pages to crime news when Virginia police charged him with disorderly conduct, reckless driving, possession of a concealed weapon and cocaine.



Where is he now? In a Seattle suburb at a private school the Zion Preparatory Academy, you'll find a pleasant, 49-year-old ordained minister who teaches kids in Grades 1-6 to read. "Sure I did some foolish things," he says"I was headed down a one-way street the wrong way. But I turned myself around. I enjoy teaching here and coaching football at my old high school." Among his former players: His son Eric, recently retired from a stellar 11 year NFL career.

Still feel bad about the Argo experience, Terry?

"I wish we could have done better. But no complaints. I've been blessed.

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CFL Home

Joe Theismann - Quarterback 1971-73- Notre Dame

excerpt from "THEISMANN" by Joe Theismann with Dave Kindred, 1987 Contemporary publishing:

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In any case my visions of the Heisman Trophy making me rich as a first round pick in the NFL were gone like air out of a football. I was left to choose between going to the NFL as a fourth-rounder, or accepting an offer from the Toronto Argonauts of the Canadian Football League. Before the NFL draft the Argonauts offered me $50,000 to sign and $50,000 a year for three seasons. Miami first offer was $17,000 a year. I about died. Then Joe Robbie got into the negotiations. Mr. Robbie asked "What do you want?". "Thirty-five, 45, and 55, and a $35,000 signing bonus broken down over 3 years." Mr.Robbie said "Fine." I went on Miami television to sat "Come hell or high water, I'll be a Miami Dolphin."

Yr	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1971	278	148	2440	53.2	17	21
1972	127	77	1157	60.6	10	-
1973	274	157	2496	57.3	13	13

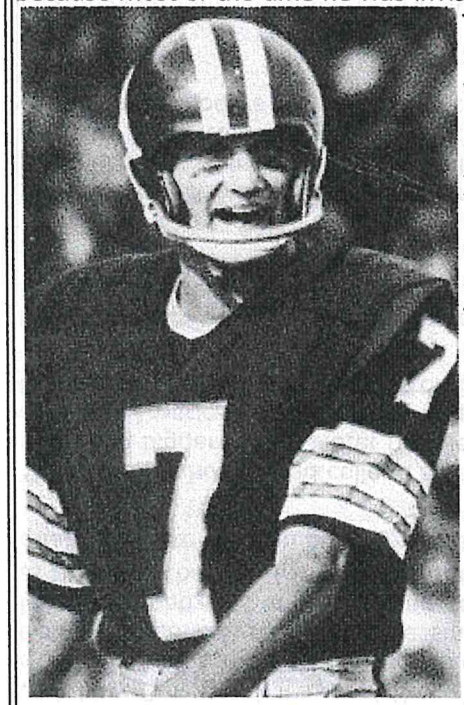
What I didn't count on, though, was a rider to the contract written up by Mr.Robbie. The rider said I had to repay all of the signing bonus if I ever failed to make the 40-man roster, even in the second or third year of the contract. That wasn't part of any deal I'd agreed to. We argued for weeks, until the Dolphins finally relented, saying, "OK the bonus in unrelated to your making the team and you don't have to pay it back."

But by then i was so disillusioned with the Dolphins and the negotiating process that I had asked the Argonauts if their offer still stood. The money wasn't much more than Miami's offer, but yes, it still stood and it hadn't changed. Toronto dealt straight with me and I felt Miami didn't.

So I flew to Toronto and, probably to keep me from changing my mind again, Toronto owner, John Bassett, Sr., wouldn't let me leave without signing the contract. He said. "If you leave the offer is off the table." I signed and asked him to not announce it until I had had a chance to call Don Shula and the Dolphins.

Well Mr.Bassett owned a newspaper in Toronto as well as some radio stations. He wasn't going to sit on a scoop. It was in the paper and on the air the next morning, as I learned when the phone rang. It was Ara Parseghian saying, "Joe, what have you done? Don Shula is on the line and he is mad as can be. He says you have a moral

obligation to the Dolphins. What are you doing?"
"The Dolphins took a hard line wouldn't budge, and I grew tired of it."
At Notre Dame, you come out of the dark tunnel and you saw 60,000 faces. At Toronto, the first thing you saw was a ferris wheel because the stadium was on the Canadian National Exhibition Fairgrounds. The Canadian Football League was a classy operation, and my three years were fun.
Somehow, the Toronto Argonauts were pretty good. Our coach, Leo Cahill, was and still is, the No.1 football personality in Canada, a colourful performer who was fired and rehired by the Argonauts so often his autobiography is entitled Goodbye, Leo. What a team - we had two Ph.D.s. Paul Desjardins. my center, was a biochemist, my wide receiver Mike Eben, was an expert in Germanic languages. We also had some American football players, such as Jimmy Stillwagon and Granville Liggens. We even had a running back called "X-Ray" because most of the time he was invisible. He ran so fast no one could catch him.



That first year we played Calgary in the Grey Cup, the CFL's version of the Super Bowl. With four minutes to play our defensive back Dick Thornton, who'd been a quarterback at Northwestern, intercepted a pass and took it back to the six-yard line. Dicky figured he'd won the car that went to the MVP. Next play, I threw an incompletion. Second play, we ran a sweep with X-ray - and he fumbled. We lost the ball and the game. I was content with my situation; conditions were good in the CFL, and it was good enough football that a coach by the name of Bud Grant came out of there and succeeded in the NFL.
The second year in Canada I broke my leg in the season opener. Running out of bounds, I pivoted on the artificial turf to take one more peek up the field. Right then somebody jumped on my back, and my foot stuck to the turf. With me sidelined for most of '72 the Argos won one game and Leo was fired. our new coach was John Rauch, who had been let go by the Oakland Raiders in '68. By then I also was in a contract dispute with the Argonauts general manager, John Barrow, who had been a Canadian All-Star lineman in his playing days. When he offered $75,000 to sign again, I said "That's not enough the NFL will pay me that. You have to give me a reason to stay here." Barrow was angry. "You're just a typical kid who got too much too soon." To which I replied "And you're just a washed up lineman who didn't get anything and is envious about it." All I wanted was out, It had been fun but I wanted Joe Namath's league. Coming so close to the Grey Cup made me hungry to win a Super Bowl.

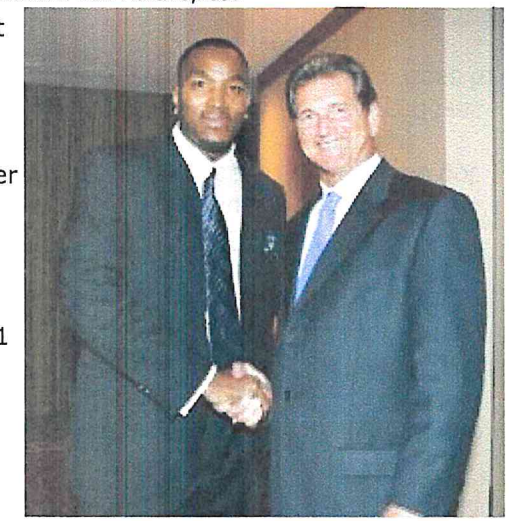
Excerpt from CFL Illustrated,1983 Volume XIV,Number Two Publisher Gerry N. Powers pg.57
They Twisted His Arm
In an article in Sports Illustrated magazine, Super Bowl hero Joe Theismann said he had a ring made with three small diamonds representing the three Super Bowls Miami Dolphins played in while he "was in exile" in the Canadian Football League.
Theismann was drafted by the Dolphins in 1971, but in a last-minute decision, signed a more lucrative contract with the Argonauts.
The money was better but so was the opportunity. In the Miami roster were two veteran quarterbacks, names

of Earl Morrall and Bob Griese. You may have heard of them. In Toronto there were no incumbent quarterbacks following an Argo decision to dump Tom Wilkinson and Don Jonas.

In Miami Theismann would probably have sat on the bench in obscurity. In Toronto, Theismann led the Argos to the Grey Cup final where he told reporters the Grey Cup was bigger than the Super Bowl, was named an all-star on two occasions and became one of the most popular athletes in Canada.

Some exile.

Excerpt from CFL a springboard to an NFL career, by Mike Beamish -Vancouver Sun-March 3,2005



"Where'd he play, Texas Tech?" Theismann asked of the CFL's most valuable player in 2004 (Casey Printers). "Frankly, I'm not familiar with him. But I think it's great that a promising kid who was overlooked by the NFL is getting his chance to work on his skills. Coming to Canada was a real blessing for my career. By the time I left, I was better at understanding defensive philosophies. I was better at throwing the ball. I think it's a much smarter way for a developing quarterback to go than playing Arena football."

Theismann, who entered college as a 5-10, 155-pound quarterback not much bigger than a water boy, left Notre Dame University in 1971 as an all-American and Heisman Trophy finalist after leading the Fighting Irish to consecutive Cotton Bowl appearances.

Drafted by both the Miami Dolphins and baseball's Minnesota Twins, he caused a stir when he decided to start his pro career with the Argonauts.

Theismann received a $50,000 signing bonus and $50,000 a season in the three years he played in Canada -- not much less than Printers' base salary of $52,000 last season -- but the swashbuckling rookie quarterback took the Argos to their first Grey Cup appearance in 19 years in his first try. Alas, the Argos lost 14-11 to the Calgary Stampeders on the sodden turf of Empire when Le[illegible]Quay fumbled close to the Stampeder goal line.

Lessons learned, Theismann graduated to the Washington Redskins in 1974. After biding his time as a punt returner and third-string quarterback, he went on to become a dominant NFL player. He led the Redskins to two Super Bowl appearances and the '82 championship. In 1983, Theismann was named AP's NFL MVP, offensive player of the year and placed on the All-NFL team. A gruesome leg fracture, however, ended his career two years later.

"When you look at me, Doug Flutie, Warren Moon, Jeff Garcia, some guys have had a fair amount of success going the Canadian route," he says. "Better than sitting on an NFL bench, you learn how to manage a football game, how to handle the pressure. Not to demean the league, but the CFL really has become a feeder to the NFL."

Toronto Argonauts 1970's

Part One - Joe Theismann and the 1970's - Argonauts -

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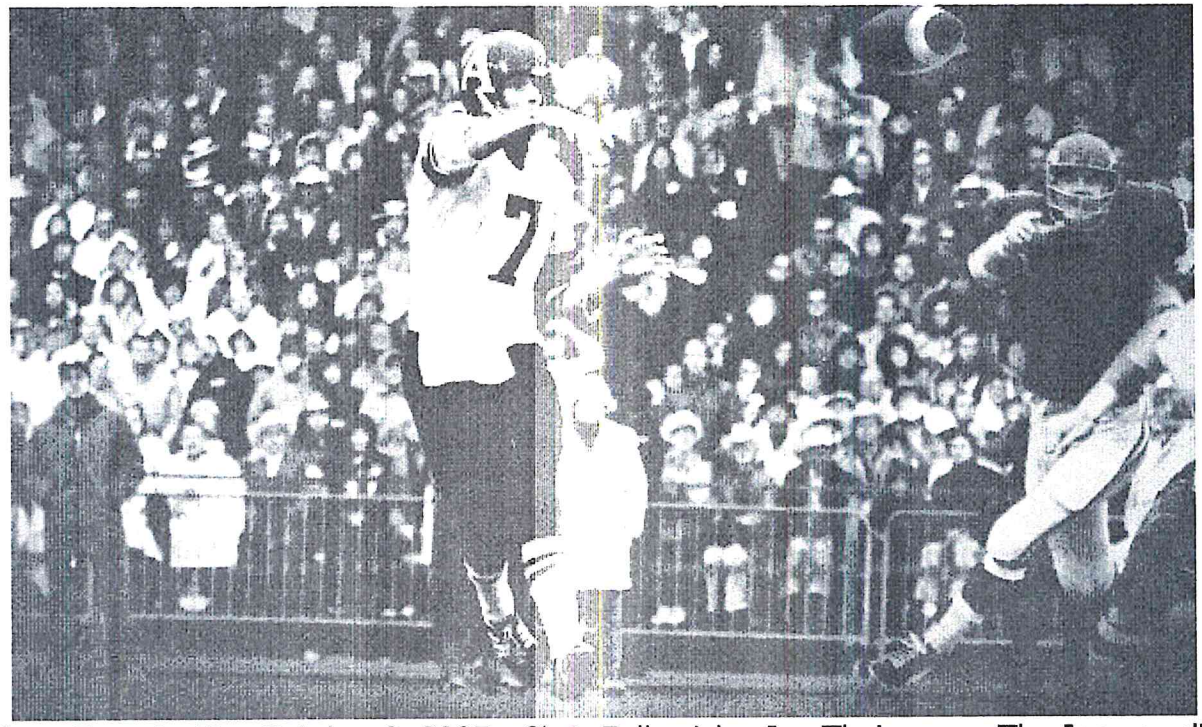

Excerpted from Toronto Star October 9, 2005 - Chris Zelkovich - Joe Theismann: The Joe you didn't know

What do you remember most about playing for the Argos?

I love Toronto. I love the CFL, the wide-open nature of the CFL. Back when I played there, the CNE was a packed house every game. You always remember most as an athlete the people you played with: the Dave Raimeys, the Paul Desjardins, the Mike Ebens, the Eric (Flea) Allens, the Leon McQuays, Charlie Bray, Noah Jackson, Ron Mikolajczyk. I probably remember more guys off that Argonaut team I played with for three years than I do the Redskin teams, or equally as many. I always describe great teams as having characters with character. Our football team had that. It was a great experience. We had some memorable ones. Mike Eben, my wide receiver, is a Ph.D. in Germanic languages. Paul Desjardins, my centre, is a Ph.D. in biochemistry, I believe. These guys were way too smart to be football players, but they were. Then you had the guys who had a little trouble spelling cat. I put myself closer to them.

Who was the most memorable?

Oh, we were led by the character of characters, Leo Cahill. Singlehandedly, Leo was responsible for the success that occurred in the '70s in the CFL. He was an innovative individual, he was a tireless person when it came to promoting the game and he has always been an entertaining character. I feel bad I wasn't able to make it to the roast for Leo this year but a commitment kept me away. He's a very special man.

Excerpted from Toronto Sun - Friday June 2, 2006 - Steve Simmons - Simmons Says
Joe Theismann is a loud and blatant hypocrite who, like all pro football players of the 1970s, played on dope-smoking, party-happy, amphetamine-chomping teams. That is just some of the conversation that has emerged in the wake of the signing of Ricky Williams. It seems everyone has a view of Ricky and the Argonauts, everyone has an opinion.

Theismann being Theismann, his radio criticism and disassociation of his former team and its newest running back became a story almost everywhere; it has taken on a life of its own. Virtually every sports radio station and network in North America has made reference to it. Almost every newspaper on both sides of the border has found room for the remarks

"Joe was a phoney back then and he's a phoney now," said Mike Blum, who spent 12 seasons as a linebacker in the Canadian Football League and played with Theismann in Toronto.
"Nobody really wanted him around, you know. Nobody, except a few of us, could stand the guy. Tricky (Dick Thornton) liked him. He had his locker beside him. I used to play gin with him. But that was about it.
"But for him to stand up now and be all moral about (the Ricky Williams signing) is so typical Joe.
He can't help himself. It's all bull----."
A former teammate, who asked not to be identified said: "Are you telling me he didn't play on teams with guys smoking pot? What was he, blind? I can't honestly say I ever saw Joe smoking but he certainly knew guys who were doing it."

Blum also said it's hard for Theismann to be high and mighty about Williams' past drug use when Argos players at the time were "given amphetamines without prescriptions, like they were candy ...

"Those were different times. They were right there for anybody to take, no big deal at the time. Some people took them, some didn't. It's just the way it was.

"But you can't sit there and throw stones at people now and turn your back on what might have happened on the teams you played on." Or worse yet, what has happened in your life.

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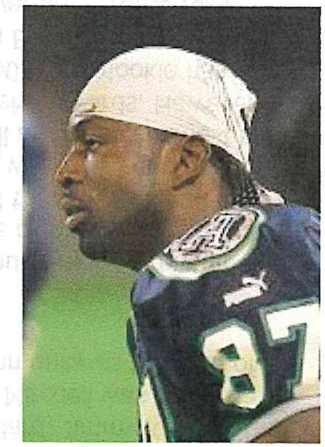
Derrell Mitchell - Wide Receiver -1997-03- Texas Tech



Derrell "Mookie" Mitchell joined Toronto as a free agent for the 1997 season having been cut by the New Orleans Saints the previous season. Mitchell was an instant success with the defending Grey Cup champion Argos and had an incredible rookie season. He had 17 touchdowns and 1,457 receiving yards both club records for a rookie. The team went on to win the 1997 Grey Cup and Mitchell had a touchdown reception in the game. He was named the leagues rookie of the year and a CFL All-star.

Mitchell returned to Toronto in 1998 under a new offensive schemed focused specifically on his unique talents. Along with new quarterback Kerwin Bell, Mitchell shattered the CFL record for pass receptions.

**By Daryl Slade -- CFL.ca - Tuesday, October 4, 2005

Even in the pass-dominated Canadian Football League these days, Derrell "Mookie" Mitchell's record 160 pass receptions in 1998 is likely to stand tall for a very long time.

Yr	Team	No.	Yds	Avg	TD
1997	Tor	77	1457	18.9	17
1998	Tor	160	2000	12.5	10
1999	Tor	39	682	17.5	7
2000	Tor	100	1398	14.0	14
2001	Tor	78	1376	17.6	6
2002	Tor	66	1027	15.6	13
2003	Tor	64	741	11.6	6

It's rare that a receiver makes eight or nine catches in a game more than a few times in a year, but Mitchell averaged just under nine for the entire 18-game schedule with the Toronto Argonauts in 1998 and romped for exactly 2,000 yards, third highest in league history.

To illustrate his incredible feat, one needs to look no further down the list than the second-highest reception total in CFL history - Calgary Stampeder Allen Pitts' total of 126 in 1994, when he set the record of 2,036 receiving yards.

To compare, the National Football League record is 143 catches by Marvin Harrison of the Indianapolis Colts in a 16-game season in 1995. Next most in the NFL is a distant 123.

Mitchell, 34, now in his second season with the Edmonton Eskimos after seven years with Toronto, has only hit the century mark one other time in his career. He had exactly 100 catches in 2000.

During that miraculous '98 season, Mitchell never caught less than four passes in a game. He had 16 catches, tied for the single-game league record with two others, for 220 yards in a 30-29 win over the Esks at Edmonton on Sept. 26. Ironically, he did not score one of his 10 touchdowns that day.

Mitchell also hit double figures six other times - 13 and 12 catches once each, 11 twice and 10 twice. He had one nine-catch game, and caught eight passes five times. He surpassed 100 yards eight times and once just missed with 98.

Surprisingly, despite the large number of catches, Mitchell failed to score touchdowns in 12 different games as the Argos had a mediocre 9-9 record for third place in the East Division and lost in the East semi-final to Montreal Alouettes. He scored four touchdowns in a 37-28 win over the B.C. Lions at Vancouver on September 12 and only one other time had two majors.

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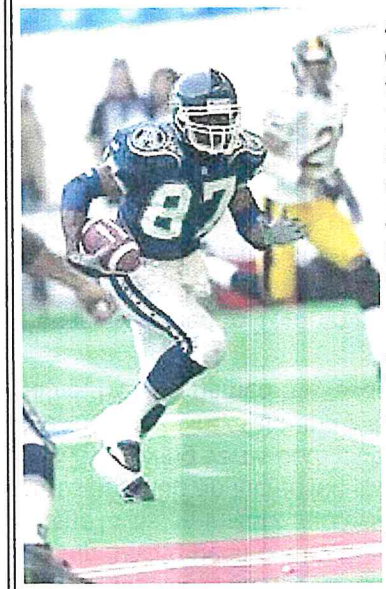

After the 1998 season Mitchell signed with the Chicago Bears and was one of the teams final training camp cuts. He returned to the club for the final 10 games of the season and put up 682 receiving yards and 7 touchdowns. Mookie played on some bad Argonaut teams over the next few seasons catching passes from a revolving door of quarterbacks including: Jay Barker, Jim Ballard, Jimmy Kemp, Stanley Jackson, Michael Bishop and Reggie Slack. Mitchell was always a professional and put himself out in the community as the face of the team.

A perennial crowd favorite it was not a popular move when Mookie was released prior to the 2004 season. The club was looking to go in a new direction at receiver and determined that Mitchell and his contract did not fit into the teams plans. It was a sad end to an outstanding run as an Argonaut for Mitchell as he finished just short of Paul Masotti's club record for career receiving yards. However, Toronto went on to win the Grey Cup in 2004 and Mookie has proved succesful with his new team the Edmonton Eskimos posting great totals for the Western franchise. Derrell Mitchell was an outstanding receiver for Toronto for 7 seasons.

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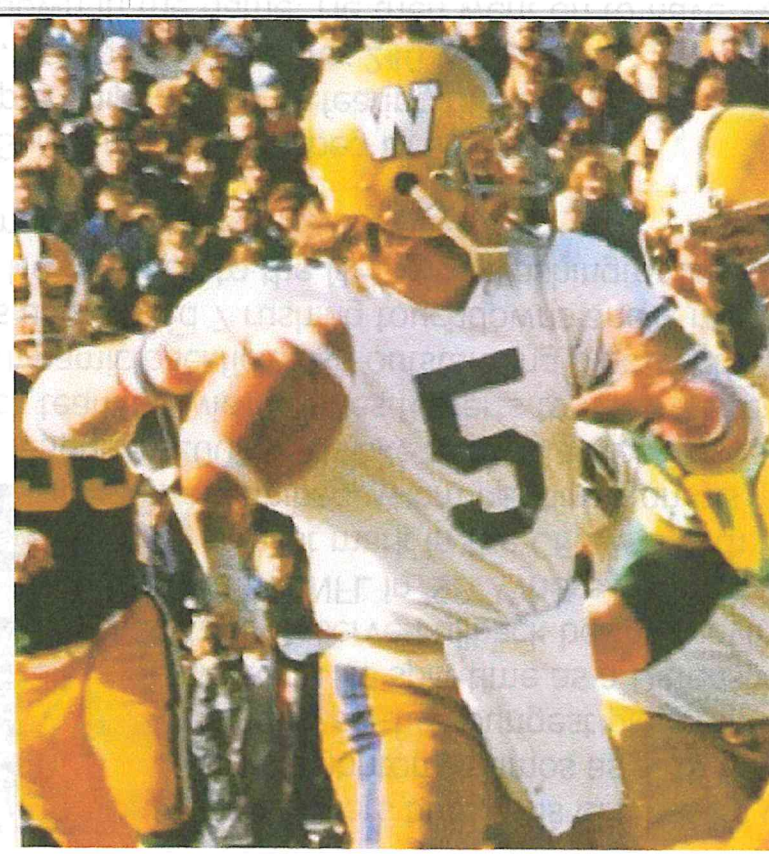
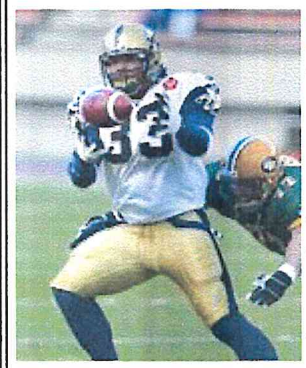


Ralph "Dieter" Brock was a dynamic quarterback for Winnipeg for over nine seasons from 1974-83. The strong-armed Jacksonville State product was named the leagues Most Outstanding Player in back-to-back seasons in 1980-81. Over his career Dieter passed for 34,830 yards and 210

Juran Bolden first signed with Winnipeg in 1995 as an underage player. He recorded a team high 6 interceptions in '95. He was drafted by Atlanta of the NFL in 1996. Bolden returned to Winnipeg in 2000 and in 2001 was named the teams Most Outstanding Defensive Player and a CFL All-Star leading the club to a Grey Cup appearance. Bolden returned to

touchdowns delighting fans from coast to coast playing for Hamilton from 1983-84. He then moved on to the NFL in 1985 with the Los Angeles Rams and in his lone season led the Rams to the NFC Championship game. read more about Dieter here...



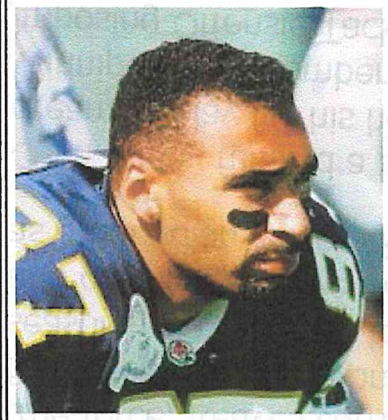
Mike Sellers began his CFL career with the Edmonton Eskimos as a 19 year-old in 1995 as the youngest player in league history. He split time as a Defensive End and Reserve Fullback before moving on to the NFL in '98. Where Sellers made his biggest mark in the CFL was with Winnipeg whom he joined on his return to the league in 2002. Big Mike starred as the teams fullback teaming with Charles Roberts to form the leagues most dynamic backfield. An outstanding blocker, the 260lb Sellers also added 7 rushing touchdowns and 2 receiving in 2003. He returned to the NFL with Washington in 2004. read more about Mike here...

Sean Salisbury led Winnipeg to a Grey Cup Championship in 1988 defeating the B.C. Lions 22-21. Salisbury passed for 246 yards and 1 touchdown in the game. He then went on to have an outstanding season in 1989 passing for an East leading 4,049 yards and 26 touchdowns. He returned to the NFL with Minnesota in 1992 as a back-up and his career lasted until the 1996 season. The

the NFL in 2002. Over his time he brought an undisputed style and swagger to the Blue Bombers that fans won't soon forget. read more about Juran here...

In 1972 "Mini" Mack Herron posted one of the greatest statistical seasons in CFL history. He rushed for an astounding 1,517 yards and 17 touchdowns in 16 games to lead a potent Winnipeg offence to a 10-6 record. The 5'5" 175lb back was a

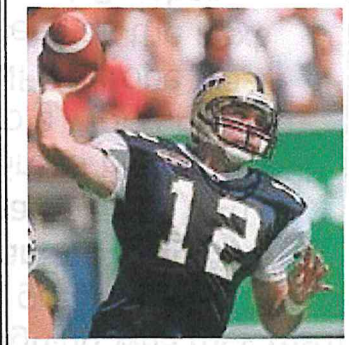
6'5" California native came north to Winnipeg to prolong his career and won a Grey Cup championship in the process. He has continued in football as an NFL analyst on ESPN. Read more about Sean here...



Gerald Wilcox excelled as a non-import receiver from 1989-96. Born in London, England the 6'2" 215lb came to the CFL out of Weber State University joining Winnipeg from Ottawa in 1992. He was an Eastern All-Star in '93 and '94. In 1994 Gerald had his best season with 1,624 yards receiving and 13 touchdowns and was named the leagues Most Outstanding Canadian. Wilcox was a controversial casualty of the new Reinebold regime in 1997 when Jeff Reinebold took over as head coach. The popular Wilcox did not fit into the new philosophy and was dealt to Calgary prior to the season. Read more about Wilcox success and contentious departure from the club here...

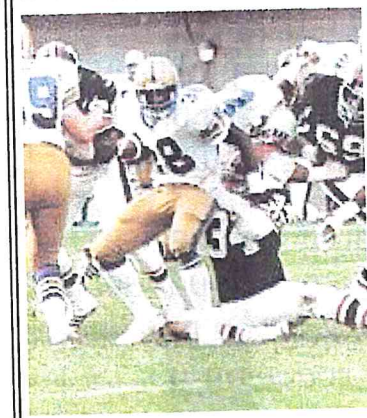
K.D.Williams was one of the most colourful players in the CFL in the mid 1990's. The talented and arrogant Williams made headlines both on the field and off with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers and Saskatchewan Roughriders. Williams was an all-star with Winnipeg in both 1995 and '96. An undeniable talent Williams moved on to the NFL

force both as a running back and kick-returner. Following some off-field drug problem Herron was released by the club and after a year out of football enjoyed success with the New England Patriots before retiring. Although his stay in Winnipeg was brief, no-one can argue the stats put up by Herron in 1972 rank among the best ever. Read more about Mack here...



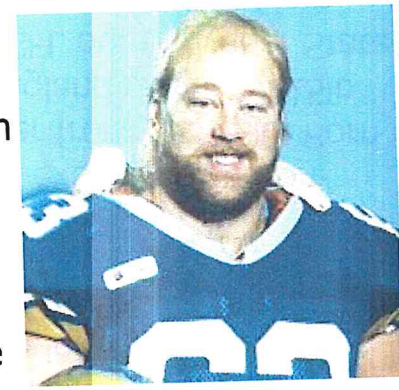
In 1998 Winnipeg brought in World

and had success with both Oakland and Green Bay before returning with Winnipeg in 2002 to conclude his professional career. Read more about K.D. here...



Willard Reaves starred for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers for 5 seasons. The running back joined Winnipeg in 1983. In 1984 he was named the leagues Most Outstanding Player with 1,733 yards rushing and 14 rushing touchdowns. The Blue Bombers won the Grey Cup in 1984 in part thanks to Reaves.The Flagstaff, Arizona native continued to lead the Bombers offence compiling 5,923 yards in only 62 career games. A true force, Reaves carried himself with class off of the field, Reaves moved on to the NFL in 1988 for two seasons. He returned to his adopted home after retiring and continues to live in Manitoba with his family to this day as a Canadian citizen Read more about Willard here...

Chris Walby fulfilled a boyhood dream to play for his hometown Winnipeg Blue Bombers in 1982. An imposing Offensie Tackle Walby spent 18 season with the Blue Bombers capturing three Grey Cup rings. The Dickinson State product started his career on the Defensive



League quarterback T.J. Rubley. The signing was met with a great deal of fanfare. Rubley who had played with Green Bay and been to a World Bowl in NFL Europe was seen as the next great Bomber Quarterback. It was not to be for Rubley as he struggled with the Canadian game throwing 12 interceptions and just 4 touchdowns. Rubley along with head coach Jeff Reinebold did not last the season in Winnipeg. read more about T.J. here...

	Line with the Montreal Alouettes, he joined the Blue Bombers off of waivers and was moved to Offensive Line. He was named the leagues top Offensive Lineman on two occasions. A selfless member of the community, Walby has gone on to have a successful career as a broadcaster of CFL broadcasts for CBC television. Read more here...	

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Juran Bolden - Defensive Back - 1995, 2000-01

By CFL-H

Juran Bolden was arguably the most instinctive and dominant cornerback in the CFL over his two seasons with Winnipeg in 2000 and 2001.

Juran Bolden first joined Winnipeg in 1995 as a 20 year old underage rookie out of Mississippi Delta Junior College. The rangy 6'2, 210lb defender was a terror on defence for Winnipeg with six interceptions in 9 games. The spectacular season was not overlooked by the NFL and he went on to be drafted by the Atlanta Falcons in the fourth round (127th overall) in the 1996 NFL draft. He spent 3 season with Atlanta mostly on special teams before moving on to Green Bay, Carolina and Kansas City. Following the 1999 season Juran was cut by Kansas City and returned North to Winnipeg.

In 2000 he made an impact on defence with Winnipeg as he managed four interceptions and two blocked punts in 14 appearances as Winnipeg turned the corner towards respectability with a 7-11 record. The Bombers upset Hamilton in the Eastern Semi-Final 22-20 at Ivor Wynne Stadium and advanced to the Eastern Final versus Montreal. The Alouettes defeated Winnipeg in the Eastern Final 35-24 but the groundwork was laid for a successful season for Bomber fans in 2002.

Bolden emerged as a dominating CFL all-star in 2001 with 61 tackles, 10 knockdowns and a team-high six interceptions, including one for a touchdown. The highlight of the season for Bomber fans and for Bolden came in the Eastern Final at Winnipeg Stadium in front of over 29,000 fans. Bolden put the exclamation mark on the Bombers 28-13 victory over Hamilton with a 54 yard interception return for a touchdown with 13 seconds remaining to punch Winnipeg's Grey Cup ticket to Montreal.

Winnipeg finished the season a league-best 14-4 regular season and a berth in the 89th Grey Cup at Montreal's Olympic Stadium. Winnipeg was upset 27-19 by the Calgary Stampeders in the Grey Cup that would be Juran's final game in the CFL. Following the 2001 season Bolden moved on from the Winnipeg Blue Bombers back to the NFL with the Atlanta Falcons.

He started 14 games for Atlanta in 2002 and had 4 interceptions. Juran has gone on to become a solid NFL defender and despite some off-field legal problems he has carried his experience in the CFL well.

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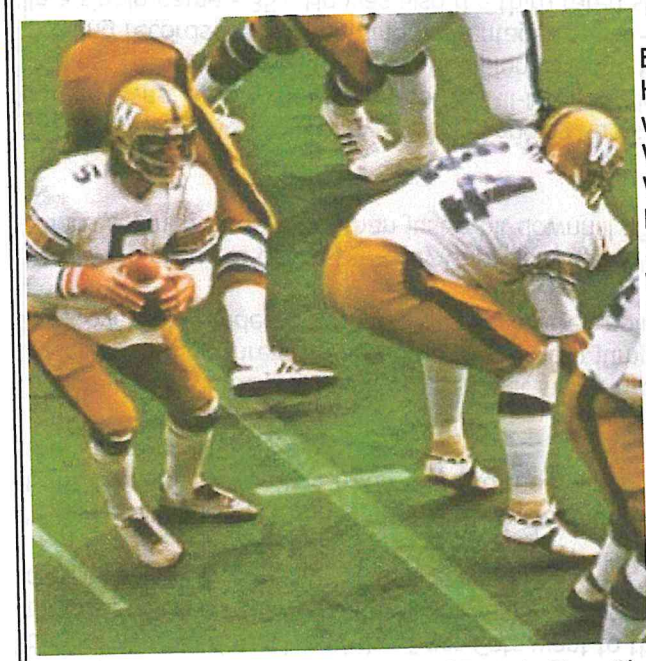
Dieter Brock - Quarterback - 1974-84

By CFL-H - excerpt from Hamilton Tiger Cats - Chat - Official Tiger Cats Website

Ralph "Dieter" Brock, a 1973 Jacksonville State University grad came to the Winnipeg Blue Bombers in 1974. He took over the starting quarterback duties in 1976 with 3,101 yards passing and 17 touchdowns as Winnipeg improved from 6-8-2 in 1975 to 10-6 in '76 with Brock at the helm..

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1976	Wpg	402	223	3101	55.5	17	18
1977	Wpg	418	242	3063	57.9	23	19
1978	Wpg	486	294	3755	60.5	23	18
1979	Wpg	354	194	2383	54.8	15	12
1980	Wpg	514	304	4252	59.1	28	12
1981	Wpg	566	354	4796	62.5	32	15
1982	Wpg	543	314	4294	57.8	28	15
1983	W-H	383	220	3133	54.5	18	15
1984	Ham	561	320	3966	57.0	15	23



Brock had arguably the strongest arm ever in the CFL. He was a durable 5'10" 210lb quarterback who played with reckless abandon and was a fan favorite in Winnipeg. Despite some great seasons in the late 1970's Winnipeg always seemed to struggle come playoff time. Brock won his first Most Outstanding Player award in 1980 passing for 4,252 yards and 28 touchdowns , Winnipeg finished 10-6 on the year but lost the Western Final to the eventual Grey Cup Champion Edmonton Eskimos 34-24. Brock had his finest statistical season in 1981 passing for a then record 4,796 yards and 32 touchdowns including an incredible 41-47 passing day versus Ottawa. Winnipeg went 11-5 in 1981 but lost in the Western semi-final.

Brock enjoyed another outstanding season with Winnipeg in 1982 but the team lost again to Edmonton in the Western Final this time by a 24-21 score. In 1983 after ten seasons with Winnipeg he was traded to Hamilton for another future hall of famer in Tom Clements.

***excerpt from Hamilton Tiger Cats - Chat - Official Tiger Cats Website

It was a sensational trade, to say the least. Brock was the CFL's Most Outstanding Player in both 1980 and 1981.

"To be honest, I hated the trade at the time," Brock recalled. "I was trying to get back down to the States, because the USFL was starting up. We had a good team at that time in Winnipeg, so I wasn't really thrilled about it." Brock and the Tiger-Cats went to the Eastern Final that year, losing 41-36 in Toronto. It was a classic offensive show, and it was one that Brock almost didn't play in.

"I had really bad back spasms a few days leading up to that game," he said. "My back was so tight, I didn't think I was going to play. I had to go to the hospital the night before to help get the spasms out. During the warm-up it finally loosened up."

Ironically, Clements and Brock would meet in the Grey Cup game of November 18, 1984. Brock ran for a 15-yard touchdown, and threw for another, as Hamilton jumped into a 17-0 lead. But then, the superior Winnipeg team took over, and ended up scoring 47 unanswered points, en route to a 47-17 victory.

"We were proud to get to the Grey Cup that year. We knew we were the underdogs. After that 17-point lead, things seemed to go more than just a bit downhill after that," Brock laughed.
***

In 1985, Brock was signed by the Los Angeles Rams and had a great season passing for 2,658 yards and 16 touchdowns. Brock was named to the All-NFL Rookie team and led the Rams to the NFC Championship game against the eventual Super Bowl champion Chicago Bears. During that season, Brock established three team passing records (season passing percentage record - .597, game passing percentage - .800, and completions in a single-game - 35). He was also the third rated signal-caller in the NFC that season, behind Joe Montana and Jim McMahon.

Dieter Brock was inducted into the Canadian Football Hall of Fame in 1995.

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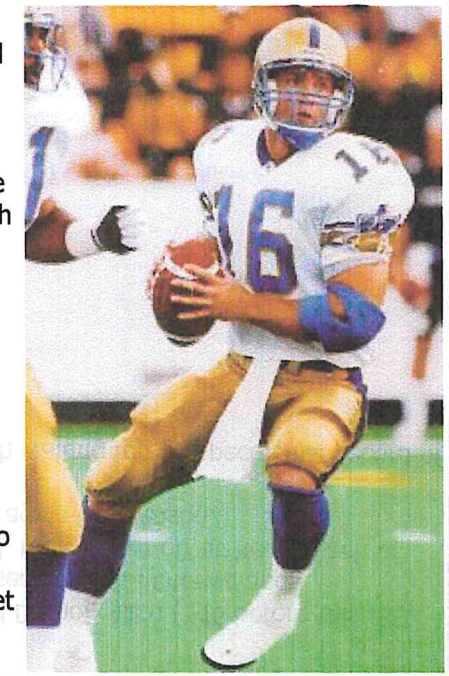
Matt Dunigan - Quarterback - 1983-96 - Louisiana Tech

excerpt from Official Canadian Football League Website Tuesday, August 9, 2005 - 03:33PM By Daryl Slade -- CFL.ca



Even in the pass-happy Canadian Football League, it appears Matt Dunigan's single-game record of 713 passing yards is destined to stand as the benchmark for many more years, if not decades.

On July 14, 1994, before a crowd of 21,686 at Winnipeg, the Blue Bombers' quarterback shredded his former Edmonton Eskimos' defence in a 50-35 victory and erased the existing record by just over the length of a football field.

British Columbia Lions' QB and now Saskatchewan Roughriders' head coach Danny Barrett had established the league mark with 601 yards passing just 11 months earlier, on Aug. 12, 1993, in a 55-38 decision over the visiting Toronto Argonauts. The previous record of 586 yards, set by Montreal Alouettes' legend Sam Etcheverry in 1954, had stood for 39 years until Barrett surpassed it by little more than a first down.

Dunigan's favourite target on that magical day was Alfred Jackson, who hauled in four touchdown passes and a club record total of 308 yards, then second and still third most in league history. The record is 338, set by Etcheverry's pet target Hal Patterson on Sept. 29, 1956. Jackson's six-point grabs were for 56, 34, 54 and 88 yards.

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1992	Wpg	411	205	2857	49.9	17	15
1993	Wpg	600	334	4682	55.7	36	18
1994	Wpg	431	252	3965	58.5	31	16

Dunigan also tossed a 35-yard major to David Williams. The native of Lakewood, Ohio, who played college ball at Louisiana Tech, said at the time it was only because Eskimos' QB Damon Allen, still playing his 21st CFL season with the Argonauts, was "lighting it up" that he had the opportunity to stay with the game plan that enabled him to pile up the massive amount of yards.

"I remember watching Danny Barrett last year thinking, 'Damn, he's in a zone!' but I never thought . . . I've never had that kind of opportunity before," Dunigan told the Edmonton Journal after the game, "but we felt like we had to stay with the game plan because Damon was lighting it up in the second half, too, and they were on our heels."

Despite the incredible one-day total, it was more than one-sixth of his season total of 3,965 yards. It still earned him the honour as the East Division's all-star quarterback. He retired after the 1996 season with 43,857 total passing yards - still fourth in CFL history - in 14 injury-plagued years with Edmonton, B.C., Toronto, Winnipeg, Birmingham and Hamilton.

Dunigan, now 44, threw 308 touchdown passes, third most ever behind Damon Allen (346 before this season and counting) and Hall of Famer Ron Lancaster with 333 in 19 seasons with Ottawa and Saskatchewan. He joined the broadcast booth with TSN after he retired, took a year off as head coach of the Calgary Stampeders in 2004 and is back behind the television mike again this season.

And he could, if he wanted to, warn all CFL fans not to hold their breath waiting for his spectacular record of 11 years ago to fall.

Read more about Matt as a Toronto Argonaut here...

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Mack Herron - Running Back - 1970-73 - Kansas State

excerpt from Pete Farley & Tony Jimenez - St.Petersburg Times - 1972

Herron was selected by the Atlanta Falcons in the sixth round of the 1970 NFL draft but did not make it to the top that season. After the year's delay, he negotiated with Winnipeg and signed for 1971. he played in 15 games his first season with the Blue Bombers, gaining 900 yards on 198 carries. He also scored nine touchdowns and returned kickoffs for 1,019 yards and a 29.1 yard average. The following season he saw action in 16 games, gained 1,517 yards on 258 totes and scored 16 TDs. He left Winnipeg after a drug hassle and joined the Patriots for last season where he was used as a spot speedster.

As Herron grew and went through high school, Gore continuously encouraged Herron to stay in school because it would lead to something better. "Bobby sure was right" recalls Herron. Herron would finish high school leading his football team in total yardage. These skills would lead him to a community college in Hutchinson Kansas, known as the Blue Dragons. As the years passed Herron would take over the team total offense and became their key player. From junior college Herron was able to earn a scholarship to Kansas State University based upon his play on the football field, were he would finish his educational

career and begin his football career. Leaving Kansas State after his senior year as the leading scorer in the country and an All American, Herron would travel to Canada to play in the Canadian Football League and then play for New England in the National Football League. While with the Patriots, Mack broke Gayle Sayers' NFL record for total yardage in a season.

Height: 5-5 **Weight:** 175
Yrs/Pat: 3
Acquired: FA-1973
School: Kansas State
Born: Jul 24, 1948 Biloxi Mississippi

Career Highlights

(From the 1975 Patriots Media Guide)

Sixth round draft choice of Atlanta in 1970, but signed on with Winnipeg of CFL where he played three great seasons ... made CFL Western Division all-star team in 1971 and '72, all-Canadian League in '72, and runnerup for league MVP '72 ... CFL fifth leading scorer in '72 with 96 points, leading TD maker with 16, top rusher with 1527 yards on 258 carries ... established CFL kickoff return record with a 120-yarder against Edmonton ... waived out of CFL and was selling jeans in Chicago when Patriots scout Dick Steinberg (his college coach) akerted club of his availability ... used to be called "Scoe" (correct spelling) because he scored so many touchdowns ... became the darling of the fans with his wreckless and productive returns ... broke eight Patriots individual return records in 1973 and tied another ... led NFL in kickoff return yardage (1092) and with just one season under his belt ranked fifth on the Patriots all-time combined return list with 1374 yards ... only O.J. Simpsom turned in more yards for his team than Mini Mack in '73 season with his 1839 tally ... had Patriots longest TD run of the year, a 10-yarder gainst Buffalo ... named MVP by both

Foxboro Jaycees and 1776 Club ... second year jinx didn't bother Mack as he turned in sensational '74 campaign ... became starting running back in addition to return specialist and led team in every department ... established nine new records and equalled three others ... his 2444-yard output was enough to shatter the 1966 NFL combined yardage record set by Gale Sayers ... accounted for nearly 40 percent of the Patriots yardage in '74 ... won Special Achievement Award from 1776 Club and was Gold Helmet of the Year winner ... goes into '75 season as AFC's No. 3 active punt returner, 13th in kickoff returns ... needs 219 yards to become Patriots all-time combined return leader.

College

(From the 1975 Patriots Media Guide)

Launched collegiate career at Hutchinson (Ka.) Jr. College ... won National Jr. College dash title ... sensational senior season (1969) at Kansas State ... led team in rushing with 506 yards on 127 carries, top receiver in Big 8 with 52 for 652 yards, second leading major college scorer in nation behind Oklahoma's Steve Owens (Detroit Lions) with 126 points on 21 touchdowns ... All-Big 8 and Football News and Sporting News all-America choice ... won 100-yard dash in Kansas Relays ... played in North-South, All-American and Senior Bowl games.

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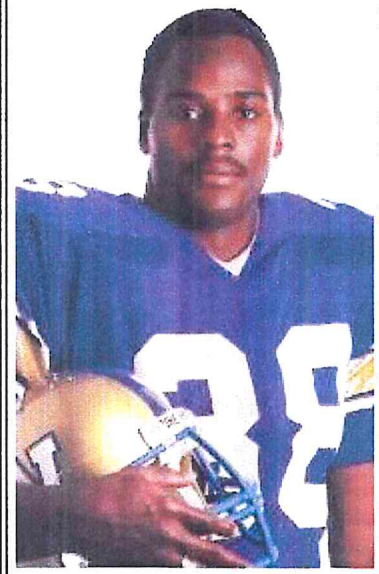
Willard Reaves - Running Back - 1983-87 - Northern Arizona University

Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame - Bio



Incredibly popular because of his looks and his standout talent as a running back, Willard Reaves has taken his rightful place in the Manitoba Sports Hall of Fame. Born in Flagstaff, Ariz., Reaves became a multi-sport star in high school and at Northern Arizona University, where he became the first non-senior to rush for more than 1,000 yards in a single season.

In 1979 and 1980, he was named a first team All American (second team in 1981). Two years later, he took the Canadian Football League by storm. In 1983, he won the Jackie Parker Trophy as the CFL's Western Rookie of the Year and was the leading rusher in the West Division. The next season, his league-wide dominance was rewarded with the Schenley Award as most outstanding player in the CFL. He was named offensive star of the year, named to the league's first all-star team and he helped lead the Bombers to their first Grey Cup title since 1962. The all-star selections would continue into the late 1980's. He set records for most games with 100 yards rushing in one season (10) and most consecutive games hitting the century mark in a game (8). In 1984, he ran for 1,733 yards in the 16-game season on 304 carries, a club record. He tied a CFL record with four touchdowns in one game and tied another club mark with 18 TDs in a campaign. His 221 yards rushed in one game, 44 TDs in his career and club record 1,158 carries in his tenure in a Blue Bomber uniform are still on the team's record books.

Rushing					Receiving				
No	Yds	Avg.	Lg	TD	No	Yds	Avg.	Lg	TD
164	898	5.5	75	9	16	185	11.6	24	0
304	1733	5.7	68	14	40	407	10.2	27	4
267	1323	5.0	68	9	20	289	14.5	76	1
104	498	4.8	27	3	10	68	6.8	16	0
271	1471	5.4	69	9	27	253	9.4	19	4

To date, Reaves still leads the Bombers in most 200-yard rushing games (2), most seasons leading the league in rushing yards (3) and most 100-yard rushing games in a career (26). Willard left the Bombers in 1988 to pursue his NFL dream. He played sparingly with the Washington Redskins and then Miami Dolphins, he saw limited action as a kick returner. In 1990, two years after leaving the Bombers with 5,923 rushing yards in five seasons for a shot in the NFL, Reaves became a Canadian citizen and retired from pro ball. He was inducted into the Blue Bomber Hall of Fame and Northern Arizona's Hall of Fame in 1992.

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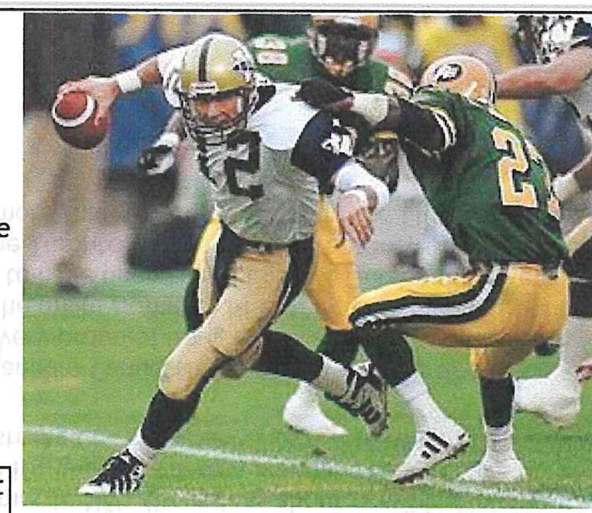
T. J. Rubley - Quarterback - 1998 -



From - Craig Devrieze - QUAD-City Times Nov 22,1998

T.J. Rubley never has played in a Super Bowl, but Rubley has been to Spain. There, the hoopla surrounding the championship game of the World League of American Football two summers ago was far from super, said Rubley, whose Rhein Fire came up short in Barcelona."The World League championship was a show put on for TV in the United States," recalled the former Davenport West star Rubley, who said the Spaniards barely were aware that a football game was even in town. "This",Rubley said last week, "is just the opposite."

Att	Cmp	Avg.	Yds	TD	Int
257	148	57.6	1575	4	12

This is today's Grey Cup, the annual Canadian Football League championship that will match Rubley's Eastern Division champion Hamilton Tiger-Cats vs. the Western Division champion Calgary Stampeders at 2 p.m. in Winnipeg, Ontario.There will be no U.S. television, but ample hoopla does surround the CFL championship game. No fewer than 13 official parties preceded today's game, and 500 volunteers were assigned over the last week just to shuttle players here and there.If the hype is not quite the equivalent of what accompanies the annual Super Bowl hysteria here in the States, Rubley can think of another close comparison."It reminds me of a college bowl game," Rubley said. "A big one."It's not the sheer mass of people (that comes with a Super Bowl), but it is a good time. It's a long, long week, and there's not a whole lot of sleep." Rubley figures to be just a bit player in today's big game. He is listed as the Tiger-Cats' No. 3 quarterback, behind former Florida State star and CFL vet Danny McManus, the starter, and young New Mexico State product Cory Ledbetter, the backup.So far, Rubley has seen action in only one Tiger-Cat contest and did not play a down in last week's division final vs. Montreal. Still, Rubley, a veteran of five NFL seasons, considers himself lucky to be in Winnipeg today. His initial CFL season could have ended there three weeks ago, had the hometown, last-place Winnipeg Blue Bombers not released him 10 weeks into the season and if the division-leading Tiger-Cats had not scooped him up. "I'm thankful for this opportunity," he said. "When I got released, I didn't know what was going to happen."A lot of things could have happened -- his agent lobbied Rubley to defer on the Hamilton offer and take a chance of catching on with a QB-needy NFL team here at home -- but Rubley believes his time-biding stint in Hamilton might bode best for his quarterbacking future. "Saying no

to these guys in Hamilton would be like saying no to the 49ers," he said.

Winnipeg was a brutal introduction to the CFL. There, Rubley played under three different offensive coordinators and went through a revolving series of 12 different receivers. Rubley threw for 1,500 yards in 10 Blue Bomber games, but just four of his 141 completions went for touchdowns and 12 of his 240 attempts were intercepted. In the end, Rubley became a scapegoat for the Blue Bombers' last-place season, and when his coach was fired in October, his release soon followed. (Rubley wasn't alone. Winnipeg employed seven quarterbacks this year.) At Hamilton, Rubley did not figure to supplant the entrenched McManus as the starter, but had the former Seminole suffered an injury down the stretch, Rubley believes he, not Ledbetter, would have been called upon to lead the team.

Barring a pre-emptive NFL offer, he said he might return next year to Hamilton. He would use the additional year as a backup to get a firm grounding in a game played on a larger field at a more wide-open pace and against smaller defenders who are far quicker across the board than the typical NFL lineup." One thing I didn't get out of Winnipeg was an understanding of how to beat a CFL defense," said Rubley, who said Blue Bomber gameplans were thin and that game preparation was the equivalent of about a day's worth of an NFL game week. With better coaching and a full grounding in CFL offensive fundamentals, Rubley believes he can succeed as a starter in Canada. And, if finances allow, that is all he wants from his football career these days. He turned a deaf ear last summer to NFL discussions about possible training camp opportunities -- from the Bears among others -- and if things proceed as planned, he will have no illusions about following Buffalo hero Doug Flutie from a strong CFL stint back into a role as an NFL backup.

"I have a starter's mentality," Rubley said. Meanwhile in Canada, Canucks are as agog over Flutie's NFL success this season as they are today's Grey Cup."They're very proud of Doug up here," Rubley said. "Anytime a quarterback from here goes and does well in the mighty, mighty NFL, they enjoy it. And Doug was a very, very good quarterback up here."Good enough to have been the CFL's Most Outstanding Player an unprecedented six times and to have quarterbacked the Toronto Argonauts to three Grey Cup victories, including last year's. Today, Rubley would enjoy nothing more than to keep the Cup in the Flutie family. Doug's brother Darren is the Tiger-Cats' leading receiver.

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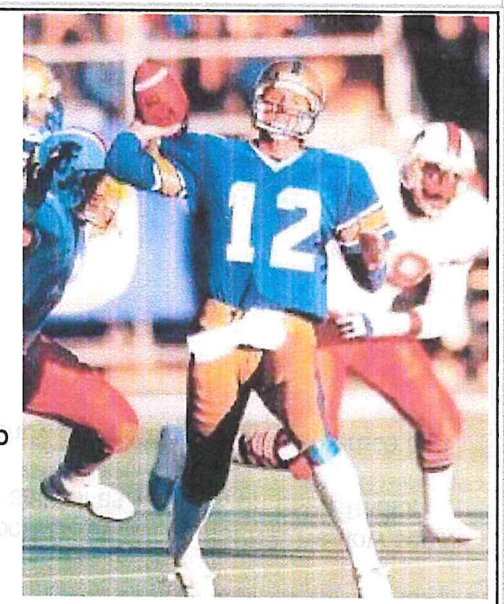
Sean Salisbury - Quarterback - 1988-89

excerpted from ESPN



Salisbury's ten-year professional career began in 1986 with the Seattle Seahawks. from Seattle he moved to Indianapolis in 1987.

Sean was released by Indianapolis and signed with Winnipeg in September 1988. Salisbury proved to be a quick study of the Canadian game and led the Bombers down the stretch throwing 11 touchdowns and 1,566 yards in 7 games as Winnipeg finished the season 9-9.

In the '88 playoffs Winnipeg defeated Hamilton 35-28 to move on to the Eastern Final where they upset the 14-4 Argonauts in Toronto 27-11 to advance to the Grey Cup versus British Columbia. At Ottawa's Lansdowne Park Sean threw for 246 yards and a touchdown as Winnipeg edged out B.C. 22-21 to capture the Grey Cup.

In 1989 Sean returned as Winnipeg's starting quarterback and led the Eastern division with 4,049 yards passing and 26 touchdowns as Winnipeg finished the year 7-11. Salisbury ran into trouble for his attitude with coach Cal Murphy. It was the eve of the 1989 CFL playoffs and Winnipeg GM Cal Murphy had decided to rid the Blue Bombers of their starting quarterback, Sean Salisbury.

		Passing					
Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1988	Winn	202	100	1566	49.5	11	5
1989	Winn	595	293	4049	49.2	26	26

And an untried, unproven Lee Saltz replaced him. "Our quarterback was a guy who I thought was the worst starter in CFL history, and I told him that, too," former linebacker James (Wild) West recalled from his Atlanta home recently. "Then we beat Toronto in the semifinal and we gave him the game ball. I told him, 'Yup, you played a great game but you're still the worst starter in CFL history!' But he took it pretty good.

West never had a quarrel with Salisbury's banishment.
"It wasn't a big deal for us because he was becoming a recluse," said West, 50. "And he gave everyone the

impression he was carrying the team. But he didn't win the (1988) Grey Cup for us, it was our defence. "It was the defence that was selling tickets and winning games, and the fans there really understood that. We made defence fun for the fans. I have great memories about the thrill of that crowd."

Winnipeg was defeated by Hamilton in the Eastern final 14-10 in Sean's last game in Canadian football. He returned to the NFL for the 1990 season with the Minnesota Vikings.

Minnesota (1990-94) and San Diego (1996). Upon his return to the NFL with Minnesota he was named the NFL's Player of the Week in 1992 when he threw for 386 yards against the Denver Broncos.

Salisbury took a season off and served as a football analyst for the *Sports Fan Radio Network* in 1995 before returning for his final year in the NFL with the San Diego Chargers in 1996.

A standout quarterback at the University of Southern California (1981-85), Salisbury was a broadcasting major and was inducted into the Skull and Dagger society, which honors excellence for both academics and athletics.

Sean Salisbury joined ESPN in 1997 as sideline reporter for college football games on ESPN2. He now serves as NFL analyst on ESPN's *SportsCenter* and *Sunday NFL Countdown*, as well as The NFL on ESPN Radio, ESPN2's *ESPN Live* (formerly *NFL 2Night*) and ESPNEWS.
Salisbury is also analyst for select college football games, and frequently contributes his NFL expertise and co-hosting talent to ESPN Radio programming

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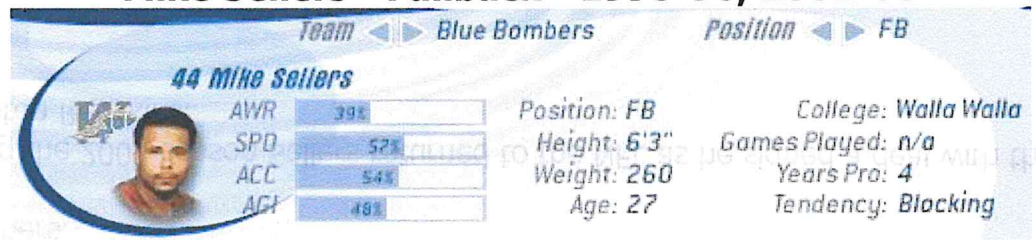
Mike Sellers - Fullback - 1995-98, 2002-03



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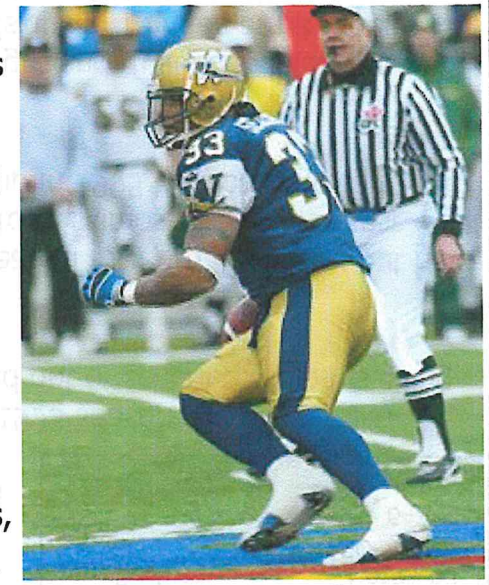

There was much talk about Winnipeg's signing of the NFL starter prior to the 2002 training camp. Well, Sellers gave people much more talk about after his remarkable debut performance in Week 1 vs. Toronto. He made three catches for 50 yards, one rush for three yards and a first down, and two special teams tackles. The highlight of his night was a reception where Sellers hurdled two on-coming Argo defenders to forge a 44-yard gain.

Sellers had an outstanding CFL campaign in 2002. He was Winnipeg's Mr. Everything, placing 1st in special teams tackles (22), 2nd in rushing (77 carries, 377 yards, 4.9 average), 3rd in receiving (63 receptions, 643 yards, 10.2 average), 3rd in kickoff returns (7 returns, 102 yards, 14.8 average) and 4th in all-purpose yardage (1,122 yards). Sellers added four touchdowns to his totals. His reception numbers are believed to be a CFL record for fullbacks.

In 2003 with the Bombers, Sellers had 48 catches for 481 yards and 86 carries for 427 yards and seven touchdowns. He was named an Inter-Gold All-Star at fullback for a second straight season.

	Rushing			Receiving		
Year	ATT	YDS	TD	REC	YDS	TD
2002	77	377	2	63	643	2
2003	86	427	7	48	481	2

Sellers first came to the CFL After a standout career as a running back and linebacker at North Thurston, Sellers attended Walla Walla Community College. He spent the 1993 season at Walla Walla, where he was an All-America linebacker, then he dropped out of school to help his ailing mother, Crystal.

Sellers sat out of football the following year, then was headed for Portland State, but he went to the CFL instead and at age 19 made the Edmonton Eskimos as the youngest player in league history. Mike was injured in training camp in 1995 but returned to the club for the '96 season.

After three seasons with Edmonton playing linebacker, tight end, fullback, defensive end and nose guard, Sellers signed with the Washington Redskins in 1998 as a free agent. He played three seasons for Washington, then spent part of the 2001 season with the Cleveland Browns before being released. From there Sellers went to Winnipeg to play for the Bombers.

Following the 2003 season Sellers returned to the NFL as he signed a deal with the Washington Redskins.

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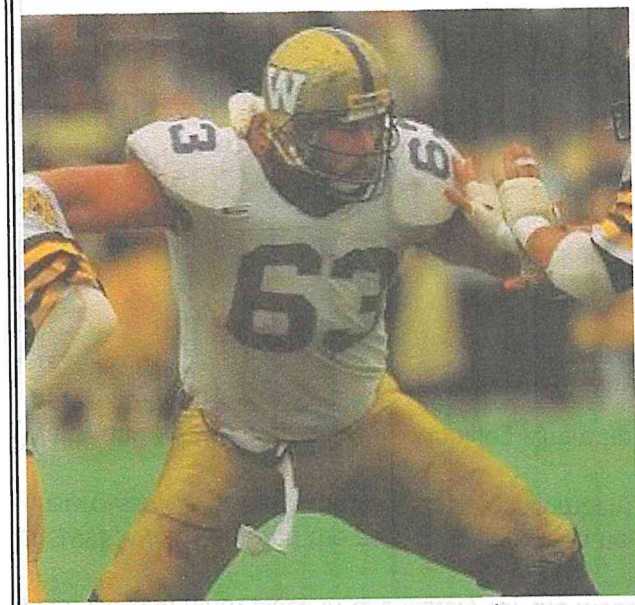
Chris Walby - Offensive Line - 1981-97 - Dickinson State



Chris Walby, an offensive tackle who wore the blue and gold of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers for 16 seasons, was inducted into the CFL Hall of Fame in September of 2003. This year, 'the Big Man' is in his eleventh season as the analyst for THE CFL ON CBC after serving as a guest analyst during CBC's playoff coverage in 1996. Born in Winnipeg, Walby played college ball at Dickinson State. He was drafted by the Montreal Alouettes in 1981 and acquired by the Blue Bombers at the midway point of his first season. During his first game back at Olympic Stadium in Montreal, Walby recovered a fumble and returned it for the only touchdown of his career.

He played the rest of his career in Winnipeg his hometown.

from CFL Illustrated 1987

Life as a pro athlete in your hometown is a boyhood dream of most. As he grew up taller and more gangly than his boyhood friends, Walby directed his energy towards hockey. Strange as it seems now Walby wasn't built for football as a youth.

"I didn't start playing football until my senior year in high school," says Walby, who played with junior Winnipeg Rods and Dickinson State University. "I was probably the same height and 180 pounds when i was 18. If anyone was a betting man, you would definitely bet that i wouldn't come this route.

"I think what happened is I started to get a fascination with weights and for some reason, my body went the opposite route. It got to the point where I was a chunky kid - that's being polite- and not having much muscle tone at all and just being big. So here I was tall and chunky and had to work it to my advantage.

"Growing up I idolized the CFL. I remember listening to the 1972 Western Final (Winnipeg versus

Saskatchewan). That's the game that will always stand out in my mind. Mack Herron was playing. I used to write down how many yards he had. That was the fascination I had.

Walby first came to the Bombers' attention in 1978 as a junior. Far from ready, he enrolled in Dickinson State and in 1981, he was a first-round draft choice of the Montreal Alouettes. Walby played just five games with the Alouettes before being claimed on waivers by the Bombers. Winnipeg's head coach at the time Ray Jauch switched the young project player from the defensive to offensive line. his string of all-star nominations began in 1984.
**

Walby won the Grey Cup three times and was named to the all-star team 11 times. He was twice named the CFL's most outstanding offensive lineman. Walby was known for his leadership skills both on and off the field. He is in ninth place in CFL history for the most games played - 254.

In 1995, Walby entered the political arena when he joined the Liberal Party of Manitoba, but was unsuccessful in his attempt to defeat the incumbent in his riding.

Walby and his three sons live in Winnipeg where he works in the pharmaceutical business as a sales representative.

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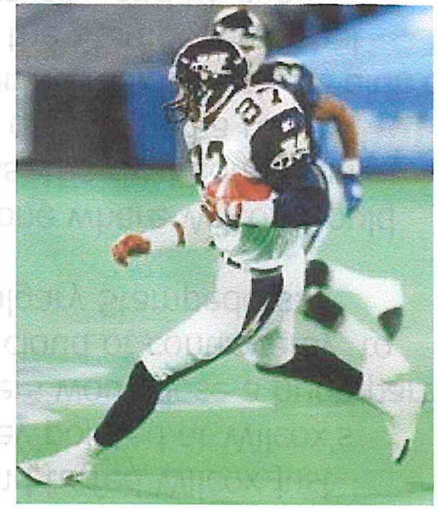
Gerald Wilcox - Wide Receiver - 1989-96-

from East Side Wally Krawec - Aug 12.1998



Gerald Wilcox was for about three years the clutch receiver in Winnipeg.

After he arrived from Ottawa in 1992, he led the team in receiving yards from 93-95. However, 1996 was a tough season for Wilcox as he succumbed to a nasty knee injury. Wilcox had been injured before in 1992, so overcoming such a hindrance was nothing new to him. Wilcox was very determined in his rehabilitation, with the news media paying close attention to his 'personal struggle'. Coaches commented on how he was stronger than he had been in years past, and that his recuperation was a success.

The arrival of Jeff Reinebold in Winnipeg signaled the end of an era and the beginning of a new one. Reinebold roared into town on his Harley, and brought with him scads of new arrivals that were ready to 'buy into the system', as he put it. However, this meant that the end had arrived for fan favourite Miles Gorrell, who was only signed a few months prior at an impressive ceremony at City Hall. Gorrell was released, and the city talked. But then, another shocking announcement had come: Wilcox, who had not

gotten along with Reinebold all that well during training camp, was deemed expendable by the new head coach. Rumours soon began to fly around town in the pubs, in the media, and in the stands.

Receiving					
Year	Team	No.	Yds	Avg.	Td
1989	Ott	24	331	13.8	3
1990	Ott	6	71	11.8	0
1991	Ott	26	455	17.5	3
1992	Wpg	20	352	17.6	3
1993	Wpg	79	1340	17.0	10
1994	Wpg	111	1624	14.6	13
1995	Wpg	69	1024	14.8	5
1996	Wpg	20	268	13.4	1
1997	Calg	1	13	13.0	0

The most popular theory was that Wilcox, regarded as a wise and independent veteran, was being chopped because he wouldn't 'buy into [Reinebold's] system'. Some Winnipeggers, already alarmed at the contrast of Reinebold's flamboyant ways compared to his predecessor Cal Murphy's conservative management, began calling for Reinebold's head.

They said Reinebold had stepped over the line, and turfed Wilcox just because he would not be the coach's lap dog. They pointed at Wilcox's impressive rehabilitation, and said that the Bombers would lose a huge part of their receiving game. Wilcox left town under a cloud of controversy, to surface shortly after with Wally Buono and the Calgary Stampeders.

The Stamps have long been a pass-happy team, one where Wilcox would surely fit in. Wilcox played in the first game against the rival Edmonton Eskimos, but he did not seem to be the Wilcox of old. He had a rough game, and the whispering began to grow. He seemed malcontent, he didn't seem to fit in. Not long after, he was released by the Stampeders. That stint marked the end of his professional football career, and he soon returned to his home in Winnipeg.

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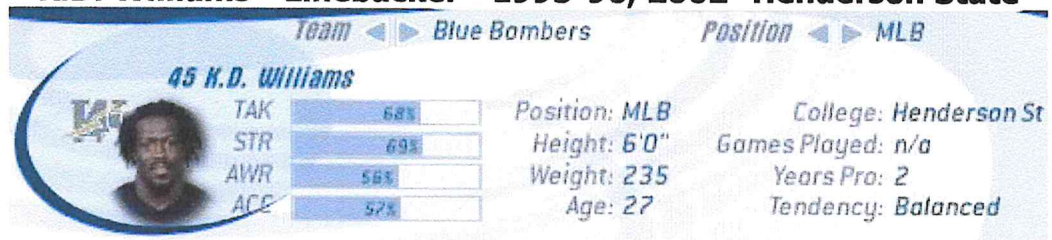
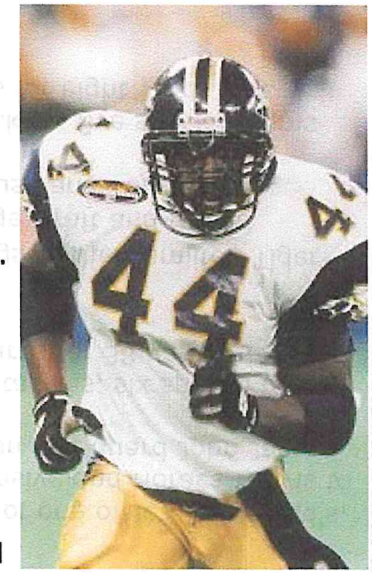
K.D. Williams - Linebacker - 1995-96, 2002- Henderson State



Williams signed with Winnipeg as a free agent in January 1995 and proceeded to make a big impact on the club. He played in 15 regular-season games as well as the South Division Semifinal.

As a rookie, he notched 43 defensive tackles, 22 special teams tackles, 10 tackles for a loss of 46 yards, five quarterback sacks for 42 yards lost, three fumble returns and one interception return. He led the team in special teams tackles and quarterback sacks. His tackles for a loss total led both the CFL and the Blue Bombers.



He set a CFL single-game record with six tackles for a loss against Toronto (Winnipeg @ Toronto, Oct. 9, 1995). In that same game, he set a football club record for defensive tackles in a game with 13 – a total that is the 3rd-best in CFL History. The Football Reporters of Canada named him Winnipeg's Most Outstanding Rookie.

In his second campaign with the Big Blue, Williams proved to one and all that he was one of the best players in the Canadian Football League. He played and started all of Winnipeg's 18 regular-season contests as well as the West Division Semifinal.

Williams led the Blue Bombers in defensive tackles with 102 – a total that was good enough for 2nd place in the CFL that year. The tackle total is the 3rd-highest in Winnipeg Football Club History.

He added 10 special teams tackles, six tackles for a loss for 15 yards, five quarterback sacks for 31 yards, four interceptions for 72 yards and one touchdown, four pass knockdowns and two fumble returns for seven yards. The Football

Reporters of Canada named Williams to the CFL All-Star Team that year.

He began the 1997 CFL season with Saskatchewan after being a victim of one of Jeff Reinebold's talent purges. Reinebold traded Williams, safety Jason Mallett and defensive end Horace Morris to the Roughriders for linebacker Sheldon Benoit, cornerback Nick Ferguson and guard John James.

He played 10 games for Saskatchewan and accounted for 58 defensive tackles, six special teams tackles, three quarterback sacks for 19 yards lost, two interception returns for 38 yards and one touchdown, one forced fumble and one tackle for a loss of one yard.

The Roughies then traded Williams and fellow linebacker Lamar McGriggs to the Hamilton Tiger-Cats for a 2nd Round (8th Overall) selection in the 1998 Canadian College Draft and future considerations. Saskatchewan used the pick to acquire wide receiver Ousmane Tounkara.

Williams played three games for the Ti-Cats, recording 14 defensive tackles, five special teams tackles, one interception return for 18 yards and one quarterback sacks for eight yards lost.

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Hamilton
Ottawa
Montreal

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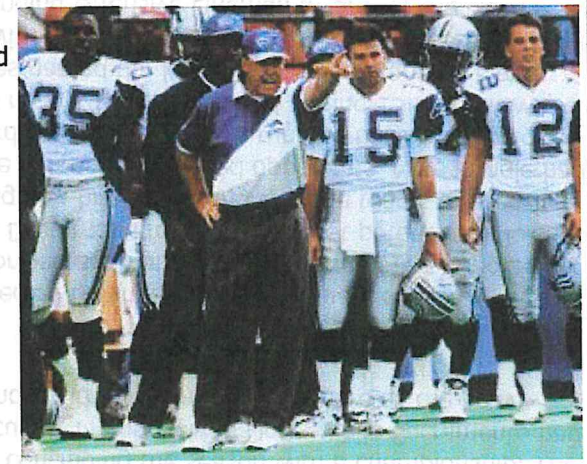
Saskatchewan
Calgary
British Columbia
Edmonton

CFL Home

Baltimore CFL Colts 1994 - Baltimore Stallions 1995

Home Stadium: Memorial Stadium (54,600)



Baltimore was granted an expansion franchise on February 17, 1994, the third American franchise in CFL History after the Sacramento Gold Miners and Las Vegas Posse. The President and Owner was Jim Speros a sports restaurant owner in Virginia who had financial backing from Maryland residents Dr. Michael Gelfand and Marv Stursa.

Baltimore followed a successful expansion strategy luring experience coach Don Matthews to be head coach. Matthews resigned his post as head coach of Saskatchewan to join Baltimore. Along with Matthews came Jim Popp as GM, Popp served as Player Personnel Director with Saskatchewan. Popp and Matthews aggressively pursued free agents that would fit their blueprint for the team. The club signed highly regarded pivot Tracy Ham to be the clubs quarterback. Ham was coming off a terrible year with Toronto where his skills were not utilized. The benefit of being able to field a roster of all American born players served Popp and Matthews well as they were able to build a dominant defence and All American offensive line. Notable addition included Jearld Bayliss, O.J.Brigance, Swift Burch and Elfrid Payton. The club also added experienced assistant coaches in Joe Barnes and Steve Buratto.

On the marketing side of things Baltimore took advantage of the anti-NFL sentiment in Baltimore after the Colts had moved to Indianapolis in March 1984 naming the team the Baltimore CFL Colts. The NFL fought the naming of the team and ultimately won and the team for 1994 was known as the Baltimore CFLers, in 1995 the club ultimately decided upon the Baltimore Stallions.

On the field Baltimore was an astonishing success, they finished 1994 at 12-6 good for second in the revamped CFL Eastern division. At home, amidst claims of rampant free tickets, the club drew an impressive average attendance of 36,499 which included a franchise high of 42,116 for a September 10th game versus Sacramento. Baltimore defeated

Toronto at home in Maryland for the Eastern Semi-final 34-15 advancing to the Eastern Final in Winnipeg versus the Blue Bombers. Baltimore became the first American team to advance to the Grey Cup defeating Winnipeg 14-12 on a Donald Igwebuike field goal.

The win set the stage for a patriotic battle versus the B.C.Lions who where the host team for the Grey Cup at B.C.Place in 1994. A crowd of 55,097 turned out for the battle of Canada versus the U.S. upstarts as it was billed. The game was a thriller. Tracy Ham played well but had a crucial fumble late in the game. Lui Passaglia kicked the winning field goal with no time on the clock to claim the victory for the Lions 26-23. It was a classic Grey Cup battle and Baltimore vowed to return to the big game. For the season Matt Goodwin the linebacker out of Iowa State was named leagues top rookie and Shar Pourdanesh was named the leagues Most Outstanding Offensive Lineman.

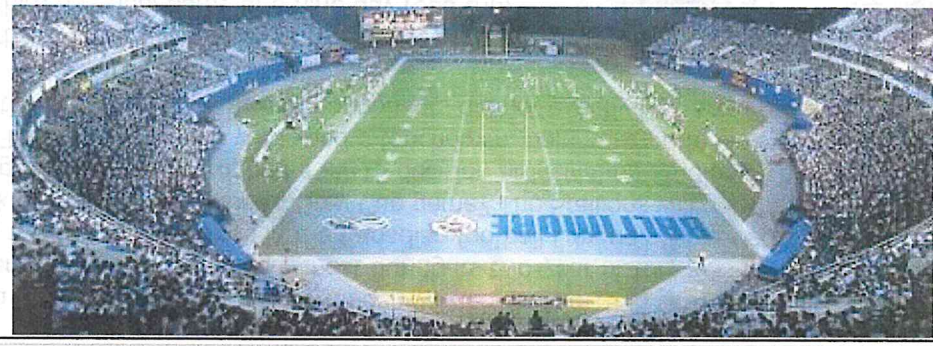
The team returned with virtually the same roster intact for 1995. Las Vegas Posse orphan Carlos Huerta joined the club as the new place kicker replacing Igwebuike as the only major roster change. Optimism was high for the team coming off the narrow defeat the renamed Stallions were focused on concluding the season with a championship. The league had added 2 more expansion teams in the Birmingham Barracudas, Memphis Mad Dogs, while Sacramento had relocated as the San Antonio Texans. The league now had a North and South division with Baltimore as the heavy favorite in the South division amongst the other American clubs.

As expected Baltimore had a dominant season. Tracy Ham formed a lethal combination with Mike Pringle and Robert Drummond forming the most potent backfield in the league. Chris Armstrong was the teams top receiver and the defence dominated opponents. Mike Pringle had a record breaking season at running back rushing for a league record 1,972 yards and adding 13 touchdowns and was named the leagues Most Outstanding Player. Mike Withycombe captured the second consecutive Most Outstanding Offensive Lineman award for the clubs dominant O-line. Baltimore finished as expected at the top of the South division with a 15-3 record. Matthews and company easily handled San Antonio in the Southern final in Baltimore 21-11 to advance to the Grey Cup again this time to face Wally Buono, Doug Flutie and the 15-3 Calgary Stampeders for the big game at Taylor Field in Regina. This time Baltimore would not be denied as the handled Calgary for a 37-20 victory. Tracy Ham was named the game MVP passing for 213 yards and adding a rushing touchdown. The win capped two seasons of hard work for both Popp and Matthews but with the American clubs existence hanging by a thread the future was uncertain.

Art Modell had announced that he would be moving the Cleveland Browns to Baltimore in 1996 returning the NFL to the city 12 years after it had left. That announcement was made prior to the Stallions Grey Cup victory and definately

took the enthusiasm out of the city. Only around 200 fans showed up for a scaled down Grey Cup celebration and the writing was on the wall for the franchise. After some failed negotiations by Speros with town officials it was determined the future was dead for the CFL in Baltimore along with every other American based club. The remnants of Baltimore were the only club to survive the collapse of the American teams as Speros relocated the team to Montreal. The Montreal Alouettes were reborn with a number of former Stallions: Ham, Armstrong, Pringle and Burch all continued with the organization in Montreal for the 1996 CFL season.

Baltimore had unparalleled success over their two season run in the Canadian Football League. A 27-9 regular season record and two trip to the Grey Cup culminating in victory in 1995. It may have been a short stay but Baltimore will always hold a place in the history of the Canadian Football League and the Grey Cup. -By CFL-H-
-source CFL facts figures records 1994,96,98.



Baltim e Stallions

East:
Toronto
Hamilton
Ottawa
Montreal

West:
Winnipeg
Saskatchewan
Calgary
British Columbia
Edmonton

CFL Home

O.J. Brigance - Linebacker - 1994-95 - Rice University

Team Stallions Position LOLB

50 O.J. Brigance

TAK 78% College Rice
STR 69% Games Played n/a
AVR 58% Years Pro 6
ACE 63% Tendency Run Stopping

Brigance, 6 feet and 236 pounds, graduated from Rice and began his CFL career in 1991 with British Columbia. He spent 3 seasons with the Lions (1991-93) and was named an All-Conference LB. Brigance then joined the CFL's Baltimore Stallions from 1994-95, helping the team earn a Grey Cup Championship in 1995.

O.J. Brigance said a better script could not have been written for the 1995 Grey Cup. The only Canadian Football League team Baltimore had failed to beat during its two-year history was the Calgary Stampeders prior to the victory, the last for Baltimore in the Canadian football League. What better way to break that string than to knock off Calgary in Sunday's Grey Cup game? The Stallions will get the chance they have waited for since Aug. 6, when they dropped a 29-15 decision at McMahon Stadium. That day, Calgary quarterback Doug Flutie threw for 405 yards and a touchdown. Baltimore's offense was going into a slump it wouldn't shake for three more weeks. And the opponents did not exactly face each other on equal terms.

Calgary came into the contest on nine days of rest. The Stallions were playing their third and final game of a nine-day road trip. They were four days removed from a 19-12 victory at Edmonton, during which they lost free safety Lester Smith to a broken foot for the season, and nearly lost quarterback Tracy Ham to a sprained ankle. The Stallions turned to backup Shawn Jones, but called on Ham in the first half, after Jones failed to move the offense consistently. Ham gave the Stallions a spark, but they tired in the second half, when their defense spent most of the time on the field, and Baltimore managed only two points. The slate has been wiped clean. The Grey Cup crown will be decided between the two teams with the best records in the CFL, and each team has seven days to prepare.

"It's a bit more of an even playing field, and that's all you ever want as a player," said Brigance, Baltimore's

middle linebacker. "If we wrote the script, we couldn't have come up with anything better. We'll have a full week of rest this time around. I'm really looking forward to the two best teams coming in with the same amount of rest. And in a way, I'm kind of happy that Flutie is playing."

Baltimore became the first and only American based team to capture the championship for Canadian football supremacy defeating Calgary 37-20. Following the season all of the American franchises folded, Baltimore was the only organization that survived moving to Montreal as the re-born Montreal Alouettes. Brigance moved on to fulfill his football dreams in the NFL.

He entered the NFL in 1996 with the Miami Dolphins and was voted as a team captain twice in 4 seasons. His Dolphins teammates also selected him as the Ed Block Courage Award recipient in 1999. Throughout his 7-year NFL career, Brigance was involved with the community and has remained involved since his retirement. In Miami, Brigance was involved in a number of different community organizations, including Habitat for Humanity, Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and the Daily Food Bank. Brigance was honored with the NFLPA's Unsung Hero award in 1999.

There are Ravens who played for a football team in Cleveland that moved, but there is just one who played for a team in Baltimore only to see it move.

No, not the Colts, but the Baltimore Stallions of the Canadian Football League.

That man is O.J. Brigance, a special-teams player and backup linebacker who needed five years after graduation from Rice to get into the NFL.

But look at him now. Though Brigance has taken the long road, he has reached the pinnacle of a journey-filled career even if he awaits his first start in 70 games.

Former Ravens and Baltimore Stallions (CFL) LB O.J. Brigance is in his 2nd year as the Ravens' director of player development. Brigance, who earned a Super Bowl ring with the Ravens in 2000, oversees all Ravens player development programs and works closely with Ravens players, assisting with each phase of their careers.

Las Vegas Posse

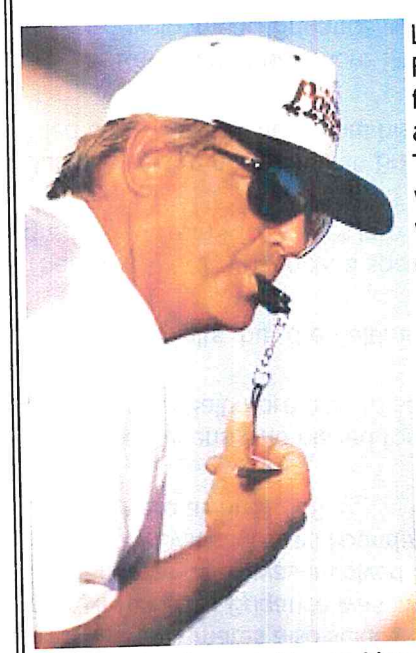
East:
Toronto
Hamilton
Ottawa
Montreal

West:
Winnipeg
Saskatchewan
Calgary
British Columbia
Edmonton

CFL Home

Las Vegas Posse 1994

Home Stadium: Sam Boyd Stadium (32,000)



Las Vegas was granted the second American Expansion franchise in Canadian Football League history on July 26, 1993. Entrepreneur Nick Mileti paid $2.5 million for the franchise and set up shop in the desert of Nevada. Mileti had previously been an investor in the World Football League in the 1970's with a franchise in Cleveland. The controlling company was placed on the NASDAQ and significant start-up capital was raised. The Club struck a marketing deal with the Riviera hotel and the team was promoted as the parking lot of the hotel was transformed into a practice field dubbed "the field of imPOSSEable dreams."

For a coach the Posse hired former Ron Meyer. Ron had extensive experience in the NFL coaching with New England and Indianapolis. In addition, Meyer had ties to the community having also coached the UNLV running rebels. For talent Mileti and Meyer looked big recruiting Florida State sophomore Tamarick Vanover. Vanover had some trouble while attending Florida State and left after just two seasons. A lucrative 6 figure salary lured him to Las Vegas as a receiver and return specialist. The club won it's first game a pre-season match versus B.C. at B.C.Place.

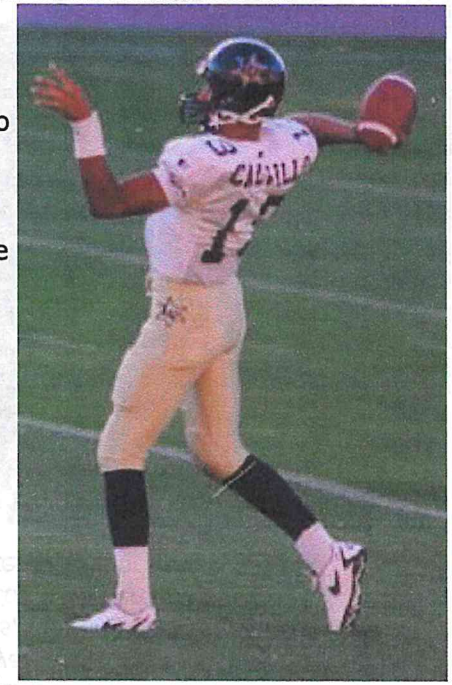
-excerpted from:The Canadian Football League:ThePhoenixofProfessionalSportsLeagues bySteveO'Brien pg.105

Vanover had an inauspicious start to his CFL career and the leagues rules much to the chagrin of coach Meyer. Vanover called for a fair catch, then watched as the ball bounced away and was recovered by B.C. in the Posse end zone for a touchdown. On the ensuing kick-off, Vanover picked up the ball, ran back into the endzone and out of bounds, unaware that this gave the Lions a safety.

-

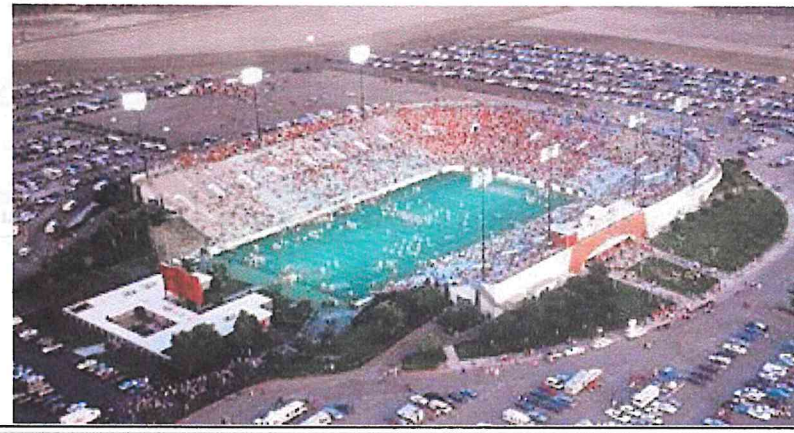
The fumbling and bumbling was a sign of things to come. An especiall hot summer, even by Nevada standards, did not help the cause of the Posse. Home attendance dwindled to embarrassing lows under 10,000 and then under 6,000. The embarrassment was not just contained to the 60 minutes of football. An event that made headlines on both sides of the border involved the anthem singing of one Dennis K.C. Parks. The version of "O Canada" sounded more like "O Christmas Tree" to the humor of media outlets across the continent. The situation became so bad that

the final game in Las Vegas Posse history was moved to Edmonton. The club finished the season at 5-13.



Notable performers included quarterback Anthony Calvillo. In his rookie season Calvillo fresh out of Utah State saw the bulk of action behind center for Las Vegas completing 154 of 348 attempts for 2,582 yards with 13 touchdowns to go with 15 interceptions. Calvillo has gone on to become one the all-time great Quarterbacks in league history capturing the leagues Most Outstanding Player award in 2004 with Montreal and in the top five in career passing yardage. The place kicker for Las Vegas in 1994 was University of Miami grad Carlos Huerta he was good on 38 of 49 field goal attempts with a long of 54 yards. Huerta would move on to the Baltimore Stallions in 1995 and capture the Grey Cup for the year. The clubs marquee player Tamarick Vanover finished the year with 385 receiving yards and 3 touchdowns. As a kick returner Vanover had 718 kickoff return yard including a 90 yard return for a touchdown, he add 341 punt return yards and a 105 yard punt return score. Vanover would not return to the CFL in 1995 and was a 3rd round pick of the Kansas City Chiefs with whom he enjoyed success for a couple of seasons.

The deck was definitely stacked against Las Vegas considering the league is a summer league. The weather proved a factor in poor ticket sales but as with other failed expansion ventures the commitment was not consistent from the principal figures behind the franchise. The club folded officially prior to the 1995 season and a dispersal draft was held for the players.



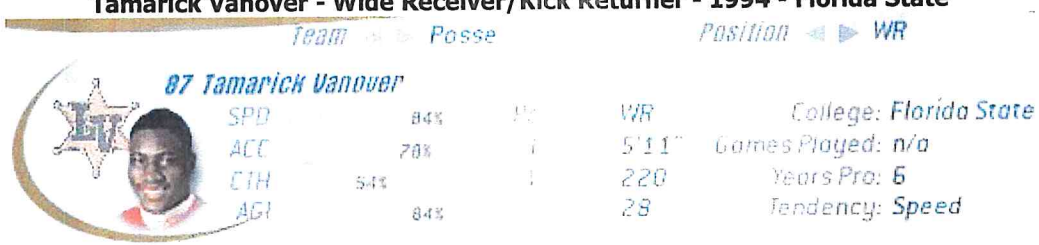
Las Vegas Posse

East:
Toronto
Hamilton
Ottawa
Montreal

West:
Winnipeg
Saskatchewan
Calgary
British Columbia
Edmonton

CFL Home

Tamarick Vanover - Wide Receiver/Kick Returner - 1994 - Florida State



Tamarick Vanover spent two seasons at Florida State, the Tallahassee Florida native was named a first-team All-American in 1992 as a freshman returning kicks. He finished his career at Florida State with 87 receptions for 1,123 yards and seven scored played just two seasons for Seminoles. He earned national recognition for his return prowess, bringing back 13 kickoffs for 523 yards and two scores for whopping 40.2-yard average and was named Atlantic Coast Conference Rookie of Year in 1992. Vanover ran into some off-field issues and decided to turn professional after his junior year.

The Las Vegas Posse joined the CFL in 1994 and immediately pursued Vanover as their marquee player. Vanover signed with Las Vegas for a reported $100,000 contract and it was hoped his name in college football and talent on the field would spur on the first year club. Nick Mileti (pictured) had his big name for his new team in Vanover.

-excerpted from: The Canadian Football League: The Phoenix of Professional Sports Leagues by Steve O'Brien pg.105

In his first game in the CFL an exhibition contest versus B.C. Vanover called for a fair catch, then watched as the ball bounced away and was recovered by B.C. in the Posse end zone for a touchdown. On the ensuing kick-off, Vanover picked up the ball, ran back into the endzone and out of bounds, unaware that this gave the Lions a safety.

-

Vanover played in 15 games, catching 23 passes for 385 yards (16.7 avg.) with three TDs. He returned 31 kickoffs for 718 yards (23.1 avg.) with a 90-yard score and added 36 punt returns for 341 yards (9.5 avg.) with a 105-yard TD return. He also had one rushing attempt for six yards.

Following the season Vanover's rights were transferred to the Winnipeg Blue Bombers as the defunct Posse player entered a dispersal draft. Vanover's career in the CFL was over however, as he was selected in the third round of the 1995 NFL draft by the Kansas City Chiefs. Following negotiations with his contract Vanover joined the Chiefs.

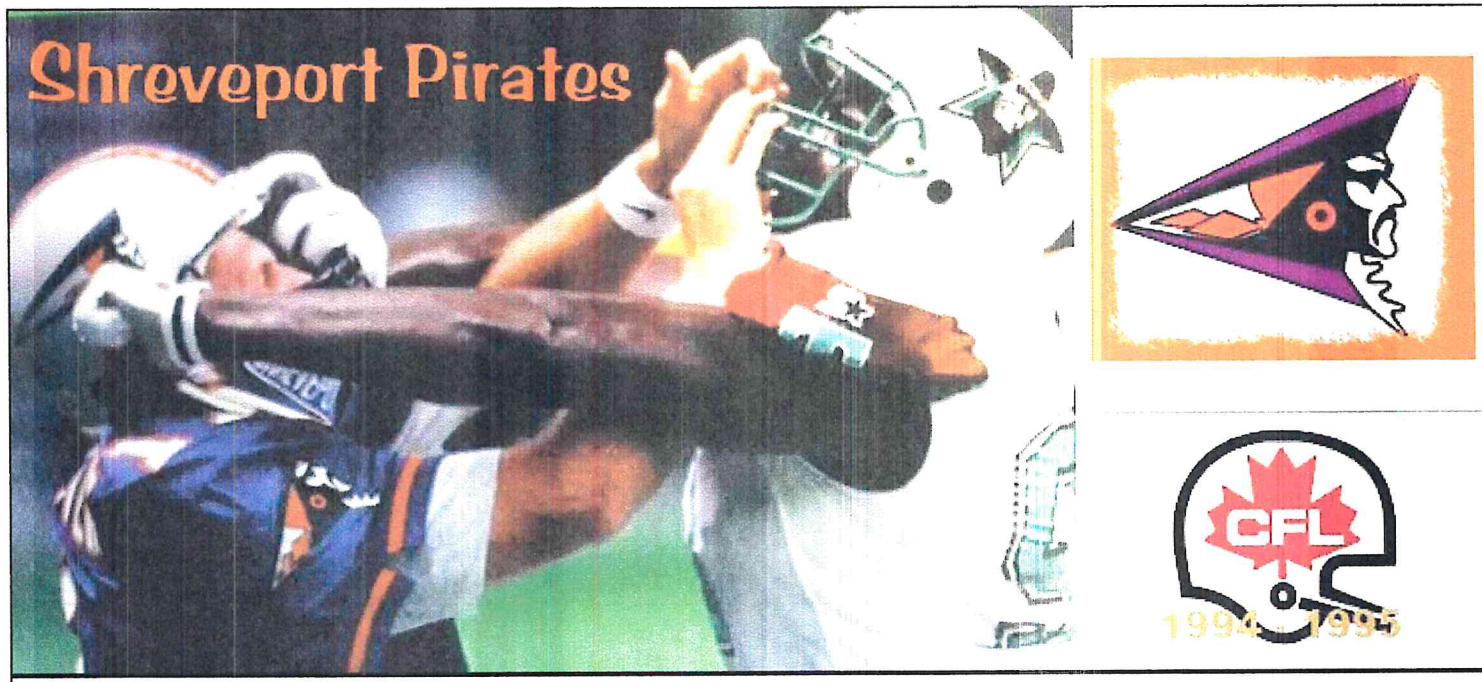
-By ADAM TEICHER - The Kansas City Star - April 14, 2000

Although he wasn't a top pick, he vaulted to prominence in the Chiefs' draft class. Their No. 1 choice that season was an obscure offensive tackle from Michigan named Trezelle Jenkins. The Chiefs had no second pick that year. So Vanover, a wide receiver and kick-return specialist, became the rookie hope. He delivered, but not until after a protracted negotiation to free him from his CFL contract. Vanover showed he was worth the wait in the first game of 1995. He brought back the second-half kickoff 99 yards for a touchdown in helping the Chiefs to a 34-10 win in Seattle.
He scored four more touchdowns that season, including an 86-yard punt return in overtime that gave the Chiefs a thrilling 29-23 win over San Diego on a Monday night at Arrowhead Stadium.

Although Vanover would have more brilliant moments, he never fulfilled the immense promise he flashed that season. He began the 1996 season as a starting wide receiver but was benched before the season was finished. In 1997, he returned to his rookie form as a returner, sparking two victories with touchdown returns. But his playing time at receiver dwindled, and he caught the last pass of his career that season. The Chiefs moved Vanover to running back in 1998, but he was a bust and rarely played. His kick returns suffered as well. He failed to score a touchdown for the first time in his career. New coach Gunther Cunningham returned Vanover to receiver in 1999 and dragged him back into the headlines. During training camp, Cunningham promised big things for Vanover as a receiver and even jokingly threatened the job of his offensive assistants if they didn't find ways to get Vanover the ball. They didn't. Vanover was strictly a returner last season and even at that started the season poorly. Just as Cunningham threatened to replace him in that role, Vanover rekindled his former magic.

He returned a fourth-quarter punt 80 yards for a touchdown and gave the Chiefs a 16-10 win in Denver. The victory kept the Chiefs' hopes alive for a playoff berth. Vanover would be the toast of Kansas City one last time in what turned out to be his final game with the Chiefs. He returned a punt 84 yards for a touchdown in the season finale against Oakland.

The rest of his time with the Chiefs was marked by one negative headline after another. He pleaded guilty this winter to a felony charge of aiding and abetting in the sale of a stolen vehicle after agreeing to cooperate with federal authorities in their continuing investigation of drug-trafficking and stolen-vehicle rings. He was in the news again in March when the Chiefs, faced with having to pay Vanover a $750,000 roster bonus, renegotiated his contract and kept him on the roster rather than release him. The final blow came Friday, when the Chiefs released him after federal authorities unsealed records showing he helped finance a marijuana trafficking ring that involved former Chiefs running back Bam Morris.



East:
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CFL Home

1970'S
1980'S
1990'S

Grey Cup

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Shreveport Pirates 1994-95

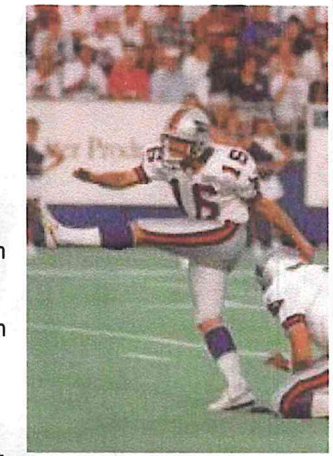
Home Stadium: Independence Stadium (40,000)

Following the 1993 season the Glieberman family having owned the Ottawa Rough Riders informed the Canadian Football League that they would be exercising an option in their agreement upon buying the Rough Riders to move the team to the United States. The C.F.L. was actively pursuing franchises for the U.S. but moving a team from Ottawa with 118 years of history was not an option the league wanted. Commissioner Larry Smith approved a partial transfer of players with the Glieberman's provided they could find ownership to keep the Rough Riders in Ottawa. The Glieberman's found Ottawa businessman Bruce Firestone to sell the Rough Riders to and moved their ownership to a new U.S. market, what turned out to be Shreveport Louisiana.

Lonie Glieberman club president brought with him to Shreveport former Ottawa players including: Lineman Dexter Manley, Quarterback Terence Jones and Linebacker Greg Stumon. For a coach Glieberman selected John Huard a former player coach with the Montreal Alouettes. Huard would not make the season, Huard a longtime friend of the teams executive director of football operation and longtime CFL GM J.I.Albrecht; was fired before the team played a game in relation to verbal abuse of a volunteer athletic therapist.

Former Toronto Argonaut head coach and N.F.L. Hall of Fame lineman Forrest Gregg (pictured) took over the coaching duties following Huard's departure. The team did have some talented players in Defensive End Elfrid Payton, kicker Bjorn Nittmo and running back Martin Patton but had a dreadful first season. The club started the year with no wins in their first 14 games. The franchise achieved it's first victory on October 16 defeating the Sacramento Gold Miners 24-12 to go to 1-14. They finished the year at 3-15, top performers were wide receiver Charles Thompson who had 641 yards receiving and 3 touchdowns, running back Martin Patton from Texas A&I was the clubs leading rusher with 659 yards on the ground and 8 touchdowns. Terrence Jones had 1,046 yard passing with 4 touchdowns to go

with 9 interceptions, Mike Johnson out of the University of Akron passed for 1,259 yards and 4 touchdowns with 12 interceptions. The club averaged a respectable 18,000 fans per game with a high of 32,011 for a November victory over Ottawa but the poor on-field product needed to be addressed.



In order to make a splash for the 1995 season the Pirates pursued NFL journeyman pivot Billy Joe Tolliver. They signed the Texas native to a two year deal worth $400,000 a year. The supporting cast for Tolliver would remain primarily the same. The club did add receivers Rod Harris and Curtis Mayfield to the receiving corps. The club did improve in the 1995 season finishing the year at 5-13. Tolliver took some adjusting but did hit his stride finishing with 3,767 yards passing to go with 16 touchdowns against 15 interceptions. The highlight of the season came in the month of August. In an August 4th contest in Shreveport the Pirates stunned Winnipeg with a 65-17 shellacking, the game was at 42-0 for Shreveport midway through the third quarter. Then on August 18 versus Ottawa, Shreveport demolished the Rough Riders 61-11 much to the delight of the Glieberman's. The club missed the playoffs for the second and would be last season. Of true dissapointment was the fact that Shreveport finished last in the South division behind both first year clubs in Birmingham and Memphis. Curtis Mayfield led the team in receptions with 58 for 846 receiving yards and 2 touchdowns. Martin Patton who had enjoyed a 5 touchdown day versus Winnipeg finished the season with 1,040 rushing yards and 12 touchdowns. Kicker Bjorn Nittmo finished 46 of 53 in field goals and was sixth in the league in scoring.

With the demise of the American teams following the 1995 season, so to came the end of the Shreveport Pirates. The Glieberman's did seek to move the team to Virginia but never succeeded. For two years Canadian Football was brought into the heart of Louisiana. Fans did respond to the product in Shreveprt but the CFL in the USA experiment was over.

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Shreveport Pirates

East:
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Ottawa
Montreal

West:
Winnipeg
Saskatchewan
Calgary
British Columbia
Edmonton

CFL Home

Billy Joe Tolliver - Quarterback - 1995 - Texas Tech

Team Pirates Position QB

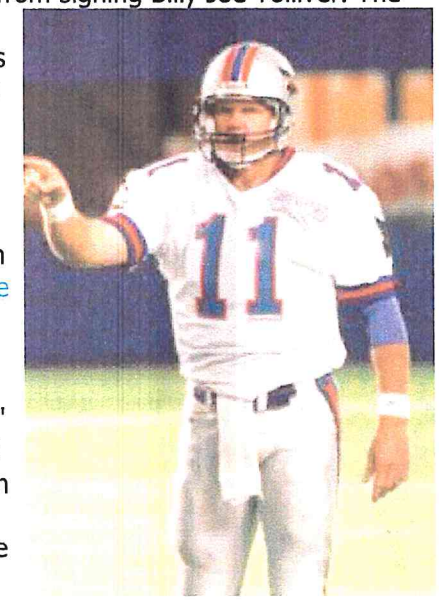
11 Billy Joe Tolliver

THA 22% College: Texas Tech
THP 80% Games Played: n/a
AWR 55% Years Pro: 12
AGI 48% Tendency: Pocket

		Passing							Rushing				
Year		ATT	CMP	YDS	PCT	INT	LG	TD	NO	YDS	AVG	LG	TD
1995	Shreveport	461	273	3,767	59.2	15	80	16	30	75	2.5	14	2

excerpts: Pirates Ignore CFL History in landing Tolliver/Tolliver latest NFL pivot to look like CFL dud-MartyYork-Globe&Mail-May-June1995

Veteran quarterbacks from the National Football League have not enjoyed success in the Canadian Football League, but that bit of history is not preventing the Shreveport Pirates from signing Billy Joe Tolliver. The Pirates will announce tomorrow at a news conference that they have signed the 29 year-old Texan to be their first string QB in 1995, sources told the Globe & Mail yesterday. The deal according to the sources will be worth about $1-million (U.S.) for three years.



After spending the past seven seasons with the San Diego Chargers, Atlanta Falcons and Houston Oilers, Tolliver readily acknowledges that he is not familiar with the CFL. "In fact," he said over a telephone interview yesterday, "I've only seen two CFL games and they were both on television last year. But I think football's football." That's what Vince Ferragamo thought last decade and Timm Rosenbach last season. Told that QBs usually need to run well to flourish in the CFL, Tolliver said "Well, you won't see me running. There's not much spring left in my legs. I'll only run if I absolutely have to run, and maybe not even then." Tolliver's offensive coach in Shreveport will be Joe Barnes who excelled as a running quarterback in the CFL in the 1970's and 1980's. "But even though Billy Joe and I are both products of the same college [Texas Tech], he has a different style than i did." Barnes said. "It's true that he doesn't run well, but he'll be different from Ferragamo and Rosenbach because we're going to protect him with a first rate offensive line. We're

also going to use him in shotgun formation most of the time so that he can have more time in the pocket. He'll be ok believe me."
Tolliver expressed some concern about playing in frigid Canadian cities late in the CFL season. "I've played in some cold NFL cities like Green Bay and Buffalo." Tolliver said. "and I hear it can get worse up in Canada."
-
It is happening again. A relatively high-profile quarterback who amassed decent statistics and a respectable reputation in the National Football League is bombing in the Canadian Football League. This time the goat is Billy Joe Tolliver. After four regular season games in the CFL. Tolliver is beginning to make the Glieberman's wonder whether there investment was a sensible one. Shreveport is 0-4 with Tolliver running its offence. In his four efforts, Tolliver has completed 52 passes on 103 attempts for 701 yards and four touchdowns. He has been intercepted four times.
Ron Lancaster "I think he's going to struggle for a while in our league." Lancaster found himself with mixed emotions Monday night. As the head coach of the Esks, he was delighted that his defence was able to stifle Tolliver. But as a former QB Lancaster had a considerable amount of sympathy for Tolliver. "Sure I feel for him," Lancaster said. "People recognize his name from the NFL. where he was a good quarterback, and people come to the CFL stadiums to see him doing the things he did well in the NFL. And he can't do them. It's a very tough transition from being an NFL quarterback to a CFL quarterback, and it takes a long time to make it. Obviously some guys never can make the transition. "First there are more defensive halfbacks in the CFL. The most Tolliver would have seen in the NFL was five, and that would be exclusively on third down, passing situations. "The second reason is the width of the CFL field. In the NFL the quarterback will overload the wide side of the field with receivers and then try to get one receiver one-on-one with a cornerback. In this league the defences know Quartebacks will try that, so they make them throw the wide side-out pass. And it's a difficult to complete a pass like that because of the width of the field."

CFL 1970's

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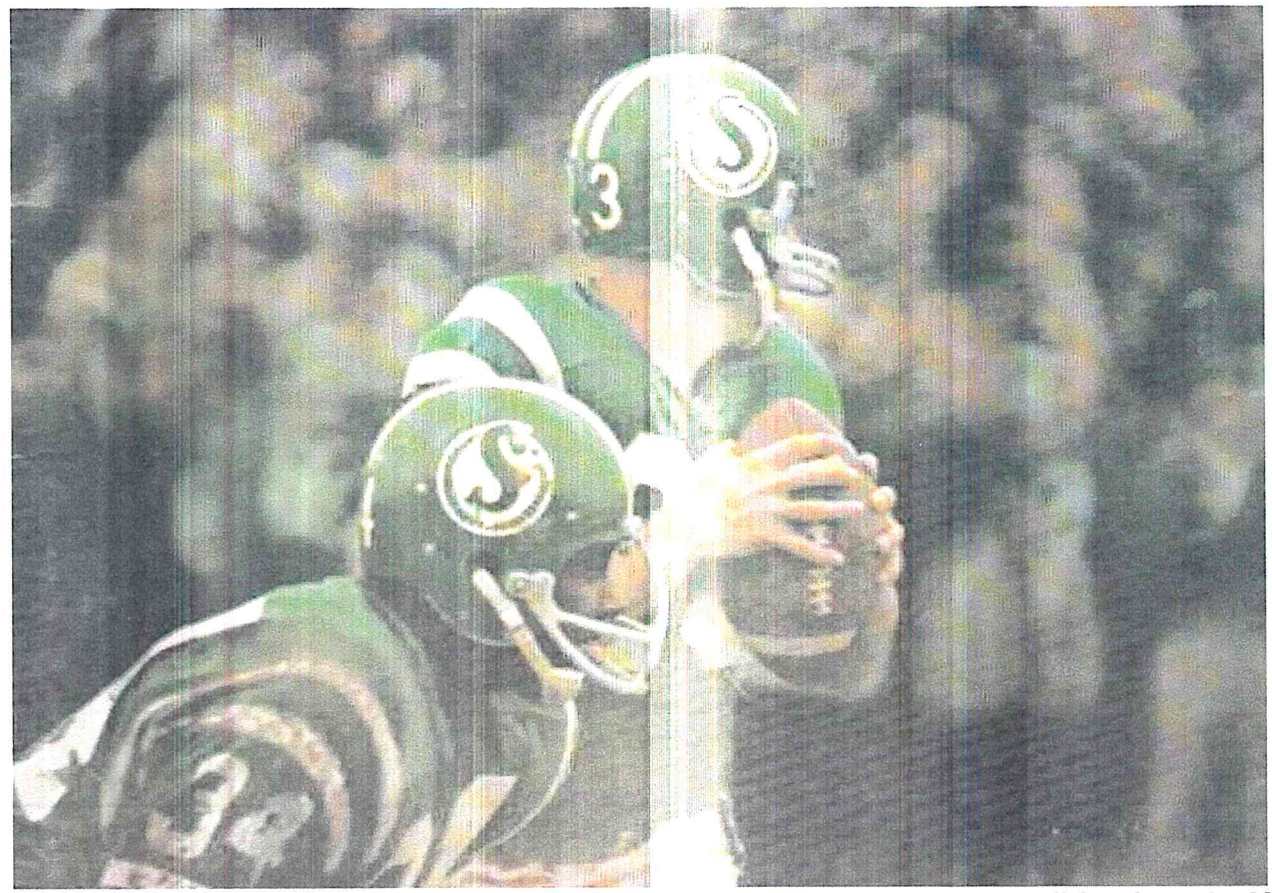

Ron Lancaster and George Reed the faces of Saskatchewan football in the 1970's.

Talented, brash and gone in a flash... Anthony Davis

The 1970's were a time of wealth and excess. The Canadian Football League was no exception, strong attendance and league revenue meant that the big city clubs namely Montreal and Toronto could compete with the NFL for big name football talent. The Toronto Argonauts spent much of the decade accumulating high profile U.S. talent. One of the biggest names and ultimately biggest flops was running back Anthony Davis who joined Toronto in 1976. He had all the credentials and pedigree for success, the problem was he had the ego to match. Davis did not mesh

with his teammates and especially coach Russ Jackson. He did not last the season in Toronto, and for the all the hope and excitement his million dollar contract brought Anthony Davis was a dud. He was a Heisman runner-up with hollywood looks but for the CFL he did not deliver. Find out more about the story of Anthony Davis and the CFL.

Oh to be an Alouette... in 1977 excerpt from A Passing Game by Frank Cosentino

Heading into 1977 the Montreal Alouettes had a reported player payroll of $1,069,500 the highest in the league, The Alouettes also had the highest paid player in Johnny Rodgers. He earned a basic salary of $124,000 and with bonuses $165,000. They also had the two highest paid lineman in the league, tackle Dan Yochum at $68,000 and defensive end Junior Ah You at $59,000. Dickie Harris, a defensive back with the Alouettes, earned $65,000. Montreal's Sonny Wade $47,500.

For the season the club averaged over 60,000 fans per home game in the clubs newly minted $1B Olympic Stadium. Montreal advanced to the Grey Cup held in Montreal and capped the dream season with a 41-6 victory over the Edmonton Eskimos with staples in their cleats to combat icy conditions on the field. Read more about historic moments and players in Montreal Alouette history on the team page.

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To enhance what is currently accessible for fans and would be fans on-line from a central location for each member club.
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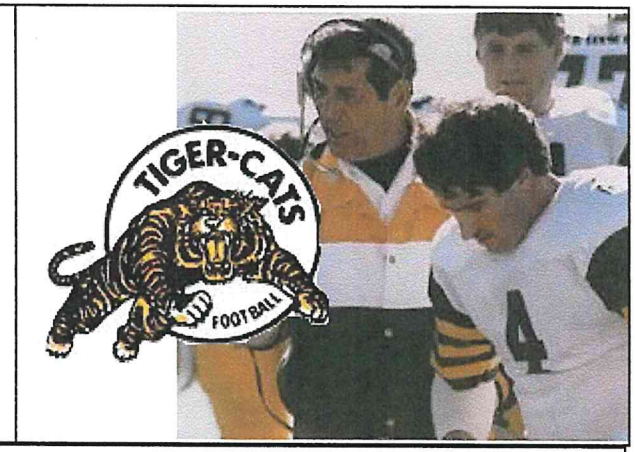
CFL 1980's



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1987 Schenley Award Winners: Scott Flagel, Gregg Stumon, Tom Clements Chris Walby and Gil Fenerty.

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A Champion in Hamilton... A catch for the ages...

Tony Champion made what many consider the greatest catch in professional football. In 1989 playing with broker ribs, Champion made a spectacular touchdown grab falling back into the end zone. Hamilton would ultimately lose the 1989 Grey Cup, but Champion would serve notice to the ages with one of the grittiest and most spectacular performances in history. He finished the game with 8 catches for 106 yards and 2 touchdowns and two broker ribs. Champion enjoyed 9 outstanding season with Hamilton from 1985-92 the highlight being 1989 with 14 touchdown receptions. He was a tremendous athlete and a spectacular star. Read more about the catch and career of Tony Champion

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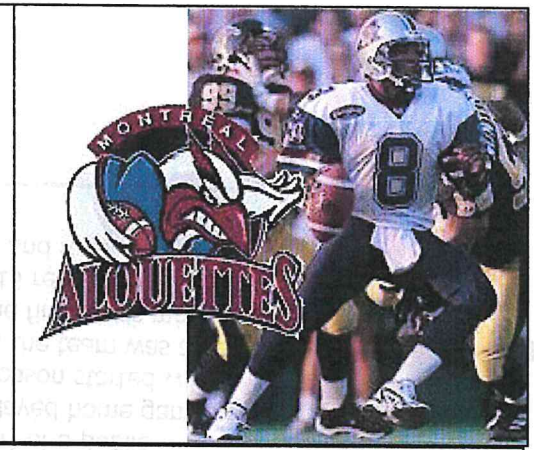
CFL 1990's



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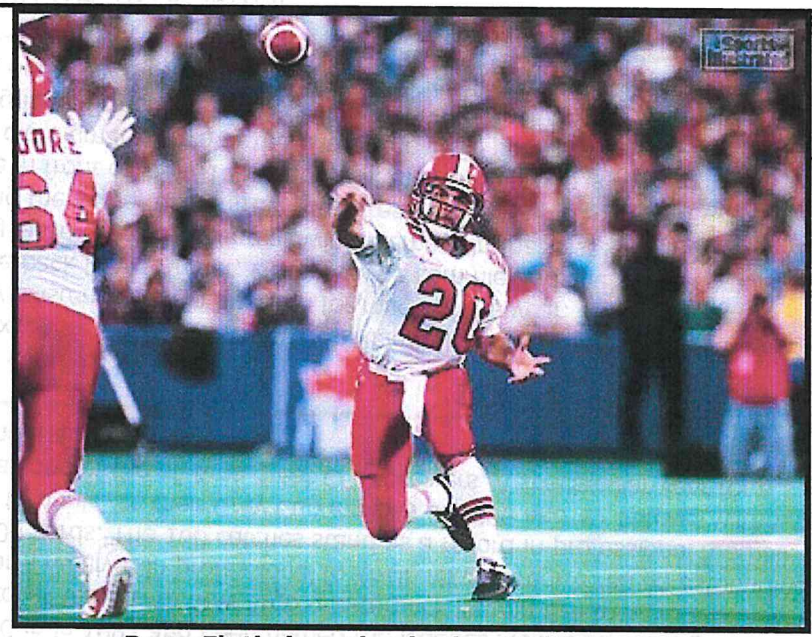

Doug Flutie in action in the 1992 Grey Cup.

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160 catches in a season for Derrel "Mookie" Mitchell...

In 1998 Derrel "Mookie" Mitchell returned for his sophomore season with the Toronto Argonauts. Mitchell had won the Grey Cup in 1997 and been named the leagues Most Outstanding Rookie. For an encore performance Mitchell team with new Argo quarterback Kerwin Bell to have arguably the most spectacular season for a receiver in professional football, Mitchel registered an astounding 160 catches for exactly 2000 yards. The 160 catches stand as a record in professional football. While the Argonauts failed to duplicate their Grey Cup exploits of 1996 and '97 Mitchell without a doubt established himself as one of the all-time great CFL receivers. A spectacular year for a spectacular player. Read more about Mookie.

Ottawa - there was a time... in 1996

In the last season in the existence of the Ottawa Rough Riders there weren't many uplifting moments. The team's very existence was in question for much of the year. The team that included the likes of quarterback David Archer, kicker Wayne Lammle and linebacker Lamar McGriggs did give the long-suffering faithful one glowing memory in that last season. On a late summer evening facing the powerful Montreal Alouettes the Rough Riders responded with a strong performance in front of 28,451 fans at Frank Clair Stadium to stun the visiting Alouettes 17-6. The team did ultimately fold at the end of the 1996 season but the response from the crowd on that night confirmed the nation's capital as a football town. A Canadian Football League team can definitely thrive in Ottawa. Remember that game from this feature.

Viva Las Vegas... and the fizzle by CFL-H

As part of the ill-fated expansion into the U.S. in the mid 1990's, the Las Vegas Posse were born in time for the 1994 season. Granted to entrepreneur Nick Mileti the Posse came into existence with strong backing from the Riviera hotel and casino and as part of a public company significant capital (reported) from an IPO of shares. The team played home games at Sam Boyd Stadium under intense summer heat and humidity. While the season started with promising attendance by the end the of the season, the writing was clear, the team was a flop drawing barely 6,000 fans to the final game in Vegas. The scheduled home finale was moved to Edmonton and the Posse folded after one season with a forgettable 5-13 record. Read more about the Posse including coach Ron Meyer, quarterback Anthony Calvillo and receiver Tamarick Vanover on the team page.

Canadian Football League

A Historical Look

East:
Toronto
Hamilton
Ottawa
Montreal

West:
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Saskatchewan
Calgary
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Edmonton

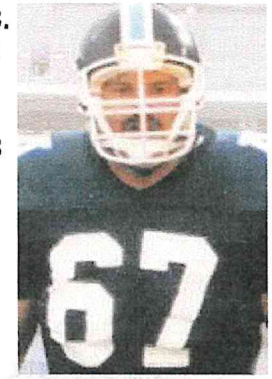
CFL Home

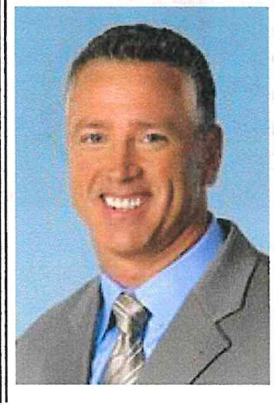
TSN Panel - Meet the Panel as Players

From CFL Control Dave Randorf of TSN every Friday Night introduces his panel of analysts: Chris Schultz, Matt Dunigan and Jock Climie. Each member brings their own style to the analysis.

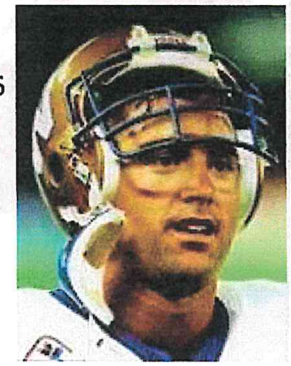
What some viewers may not realize is that each of Schultz, Dunigan and Climie had an outstanding career as a player in the league. Follow the links below to read more about each panelists career as a CFL player.

Chris Schultz - Chris has been involved with CFL football on TSN since 1998. As a player the 6'8" Schultz went to the University of Arizona in 1978 on an athletic scholarship. He played four years there making one appearance in the Fiesta Bowl. From there Chris was drafted by the Dallas Cowboys in 1983 in the 6th round. Under legendary coach Tom Landry, Schultz spent 3 seasons with Dallas. He came to the Canadian Football League and the Toronto Argonauts in 1986 and spent 9 season with the Double Blue playing in two Grey Cups 1987 and 1991 winning the championship in '91. Schultz retired from the Argonauts in 1994. Read more about Chris in the CFL here...

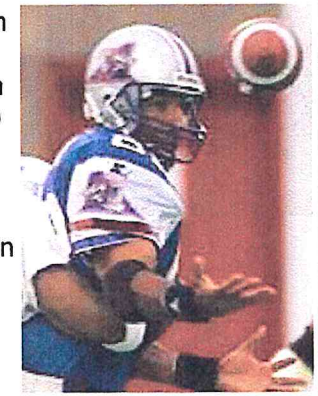




Matt Dunigan is a Canadian Football legend. Matt returned to the TSN panel in 2005 after spending the 2004 season as head coach of the Calgary Stampeders. Over his 14 year career as a player Matt played for 6 different teams. He made 5 trips to the Grey Cup winning in 1987 with Edmonton and 1991 with Toronto. Matt personified a warrior at quarterback with his all-out demeanor and renowned determination. Dunigan still holds the CFL record for passing yards in a game 713 with Winnipeg in 1994. Matt was forced to retire after the 1996 season due to post-concussion symptoms but over his career as a player he left his mark. Exceptionally popular and charismatic Matt has made a smooth transition as an analyst. Read more about Matt and his records as a player with Toronto and Winnipeg.

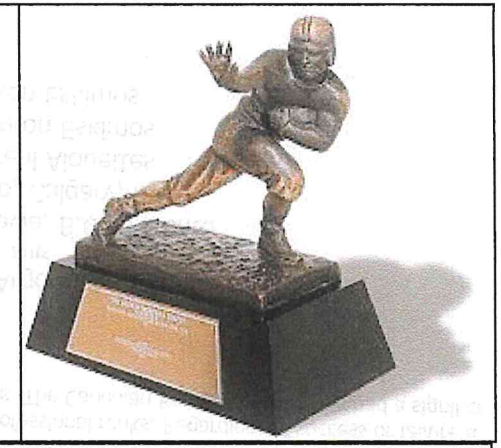


Jock Climie rounds out the panel on TSN. Climie joined the TSN panel in 2002 after retiring from the Montreal Alouettes after the 2001 season. Climie had an outstanding 12 year career as a Canadian receiver from a Canadian College. Climie was drafted by the Toronto Argonauts in 1990 after an outstanding collegiate career at Queens University. Climie enjoyed his greatest success as a professional as a member of the Montreal Alouettes. He was named a divisional all-star three times and is in the top ten all-time for pass receptions. Jock currently is a lawyer in the Ottawa area and is an invaluable part of the TSN panel. Read more about Jock as a player here...



CFL

Heisman Trophy



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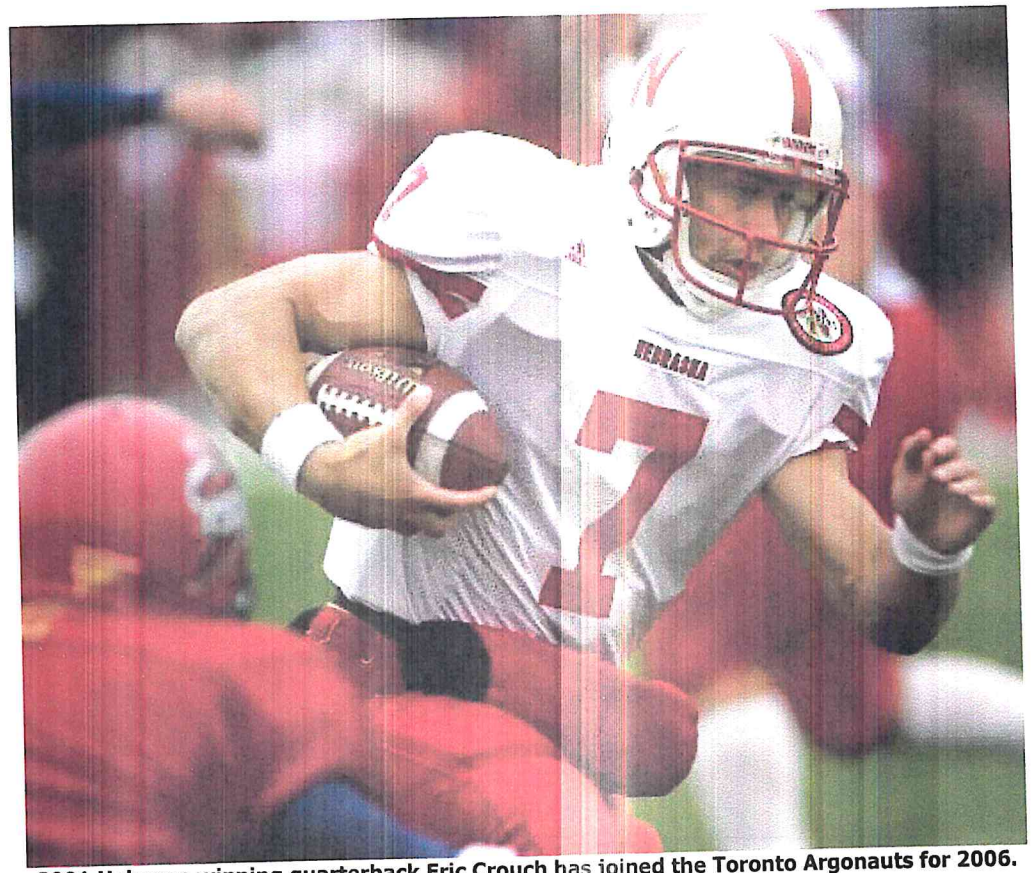


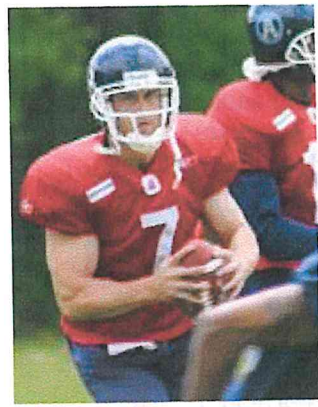
2001 Heisman winning quarterback Eric Crouch has joined the Toronto Argonauts for 2006.

There is a great deal of acclaim reserved for the Heisman Trophy as the top player in American College Football. Also it has been proven on a number of occasions that winning the Heisman does not automatically ensure success in the professional ranks. Regardless of success or failure the sporting world will always take a keen interest in the paths former winners take as professionals. The Canadian Football League has had a significant role in the career of a number of winners and an even greater number of runner-ups.

Heisman Winners

2001 - Eric Crouch - Nebraska - Toronto Argonauts
1998 - Ricky Williams - Texas - Toronto Argonauts
1989 – Andre Ware – University of Houston – Ottawa, B.C., Toronto
1984 – Doug Flutie – Boston College – Toronto, Calgary, B.C.
1972 – Johnny Rodgers – Nebraska – Montreal Alouettes
1962 – Terry Baker – Oregon State – Edmonton Eskimos
1952 – Billy Vessels – Oklahoma – Edmonton Eskimos

2001 - Eric Crouch - Nebraska - Toronto Argonauts

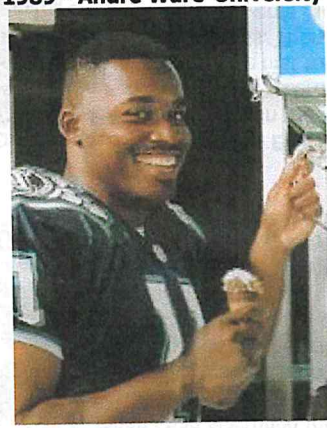


Eric was an All-American at Nebraska running the wish-bone offence. Crouch played under offensive co-ordinator Turner Gill at Nebraska who had spent 2 season with the Montreal Concordes. Crouch won the 2001 Heisman but pro coaches questioned his arm strength and size to make it as a pro quarterback. Crouch was drafted by the St.Louis Rams but went to camp as a wide receiver. He failed to make a lasting impression as a receiver and left the club. Crouch joined Green Bay in 2003 hoping to try-out as a quarterback, he failed to make the team and retired due to nagging injuries. He returned to pro football in 2005 with Kansas City as a safety and was allocated to NFL Europe he played for the Hamburg Sea Devils as a safety. In 2006 he signed with the Toronto Argonauts with the opportunity to play quarterback. For the first time as a professional Eric has the opportunity to play at the position he is most familiar with in a league that seems tailored to his award winning talent.

1998 - Ricky Williams - Texas - Toronto Argonauts

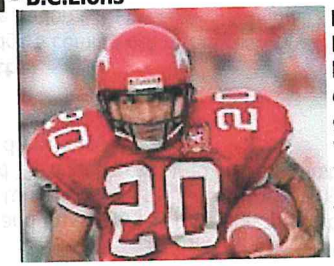
Ricky was an outstanding collegiate athlete. Over 4 seasons with Texas he rushed for 6,279 yards. In his senior season he rushed for a then record 2,099 yards and 24 touchdowns. He was the consensus Heisman winner over Michael Bishop of Kansas who spent time with the Toronto Argonauts. Ricky spent 3 seasons with the New Orleans Saints before moving to the Miami Dolphins where he led the league in rushing in 2001. Following numerous drug offences Ricky did not report for the 2004 season. He did return in 2005 and following a suspension for the 2006-07 season he signed a contract with the Toronto Argonauts. While Ricky is suspended from the NFL for the 2005-06 season he will play with the Toronto Argonauts. There has been a lot of debate on the motives and ethical issues of signing Williams, however his presence has definitely brought National attention to the CFL. There will be a lot of attention paid to how he performs on the field.

1989 - Andre Ware-University of Houston-Toronto Argonauts/Ottawa RoughRiders/B.C.Lions



In his junior season at Houston, Ware set major college records by throwing for 4,699 yards and 46 TDs, leading the Cougars to a 9-2 record. He declared for the NFL draft, forgoing his senior year, confident that he had impressed NFL scouts. After one pre-draft workout, a scout declared, "Gentlemen, we are looking at the next great quarterback in the National Football League." 'Twasn't to be. The Lions picked Ware in the first round of the 1990 draft, and gave him a $1 million signing bonus. But Ware rarely got off the bench in his four NFL seasons with Detroit and Minnesota. Ware's career totals: 83 completions in 161 attempts for 1,112 yards and five touchdowns. When Ware signed with the CFL's Ottawa Rough Riders in 1995, his former coach at Houston, Jack Pardee, said, "Andre is going to be great in this league." Wrong. Ware's short, three-team CFL career ended in 1997, when he had the honor of watching from the bench as Doug Flutie led the Toronto Argonauts to a Grey Cup victory. courtesy ESPN - Biggest Heisman Flops

1984 - Doug Flutie - Boston College - Toronto Argonauts - Calgary Stampeders - B.C.Lions



Doug Flutie won the 1984 Heisman with Boston College. He graduated as the career passing leader in NCAA history (since eclipsed). His outstanding collegiate career was punctuated by what many consider the greatest moment in college sports, his Hail Mary winning touchdown pass over Miami at the Orange Bowl the day after Thanksgiving. Flutie was a celebrity, he joined the fledgling USFL and was looked to as the leagues saviour signing with Donald Trump's New

Jersey Generals. Upon the collapse of the USFL, Flutie spent time as a replacement player with the Chicago Bears and then with the New England Patriots. In 1990 at the age of 28 he contemplated retirement having run out of NFL options. His next decision turned around his career and changed Canadian Football forever. Flutie joined the B.C.Lions in 1990 and over 8 seasons with B.C., Calgary and Toronto he captured 6 Most Outstanding Player awards and 3 Grey Cups. He returned to the NFL in 1998 But had his greatest success and most fun dominating the CFL.

1972 - Johnny Rodgers - Nebraska - Montreal Alouettes

The biggest thing for Rodgers coming out of Nebraska in 1973 as a Heisman winner was to make a 6 figure salary. Johnny had electrified the nation with his receiving and kick returning exploits with the Cornhuskers. San Diego drafted the flashy
Rodgers in the first round and looked at Johnny as a cornerstone of their future. Salary negotiations with Rodgers did not get off on the right foot. When it became readily apparent that Johnny would not be getting a six figure salary from the NFL, an offer from the CFL Alouettes for that elusive amount and recognition in a cultural and happening city like
Montreal was all Johnny needed, he stunned the football world and signed to play in the CFL. After 4 seasons Rodgers had won a Grey Cup and been named a league all-star on numerous occasion. Johnny signed with the San Diego Chargers but injuries ended his hopes of matching his brilliance in the CFL with the Chargers.

1962 - Terry Baker - Oregon State - Edmonton Eskimos

Baker deserved to win the Heisman in 1962, when he was also named SI's "Sportsman of the Year." At QB, Baker led the Beavers to a 9-2 record his senior year, finishing his college career with 3,476 yards and 23 TD passes. The Rams drafted Baker in the first round, but in his first NFL season, he played little at his old position, completing 11 of 19 passes for 140 yards. Then the Rams tried to turn him into a running back, an experiment that failed, as he rushed 49 times for only 164 yards in 1964 and 1965 combined. By 1966, Baker was out of the NFL. courtesy ESPN - Biggest Heisman Flops. He played 2 season with the Edmonton Eskimos with moderate success.

1952 - Billy Vessels - Oklahoma - Edmonton Eskimos

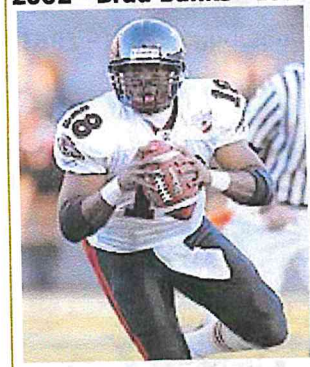
Billy Vessels, the 1952 Heisman Trophy winner who helped Oklahoma win its first national title. A member of the College Football Hall of Fame, Vessels was the first in a long line of star running backs at Oklahoma that would later include Billy Sims and Steve Owens, the school's other Heisman winners. Vessels led Oklahoma in both rushing and receiving in 1950 as the Sooners finished first in both major polls. Two years later, Vessels finished second nationally with 1,072 yards and 108 points and won the Heisman Trophy. He went on to play for the Edmonton Eskimos in the Canadian Football League coached by former Sooner, Darrell Royal. Vessels won the Shenley Award in 1953 for outstanding player in the CFL.

Heisman Runners-Up

2002 – Brad Banks – Iowa – Ottawa, Winnipeg
1998 – Michael Bishop – Kansas State – Toronto Argonauts
1996 – Troy Davis – Iowa State – Hamilton, Edmonton
1995 – Tommie Frazier – Nebraska – Montreal Alouettes
1990 – Raghib Ismail – Notre Dame – Toronto Argonauts
1987 – Don McPherson - Syracuse - Hamilton Tiger Cats

2002 – Brad Banks – Iowa – Ottawa, Winnipeg
1998 – Michael Bishop – Kansas State – Toronto Argonauts
1996 – Troy Davis – Iowa State – Hamilton, Edmonton
1995 – Tommie Frazier – Nebraska – Montreal Alouettes
1990 – Raghib Ismail – Notre Dame – Toronto Argonauts
1987 – Don McPherson - Syracuse - Hamilton Tiger Cats
1986 – Paul Palmer – Temple – Toronto Argonauts
1974 – Anthony Davis – USC – Toronto Argonauts
1970 – Joe Theismann – Notre Dame – Toronto Argonauts

2002 - Brad Banks - Iowa - Winnipeg Blue Bombers

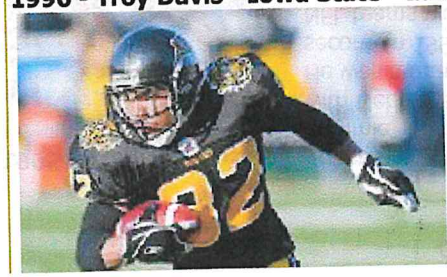


Banks led the Iowa Hawkeyes to an 11-1 record in 2002, while throwing 26 touchdowns and just 5 interceptions. Went un-drafted in the 2003 NFL draft but signed attended Washington Redskins training camp as a free agent. He was released midway through training camp and sat out the 2003-04 season. Banks signed with Ottawa prior to the 2004 season. He spent the first part of the season as a third stringer behind starter Kerry Joseph and Darnell Kennedy. Injuries to Joseph and Kennedy meant Banks mad his professional debut in week#7 versus Calgary. He played increasingly down the stretch including his first start versus Montreal in Olympic Stadium on October 3, 2004. Banks finished the year with 807 yards passing and 7 touchdowns. He threw only 2 interceptions. He returned to Ottawa for the 2005 season as the back-up to Kerry Joseph and played sparingly. Following the suspension of the Ottawa franchise Banks joined Winnipeg through the dispersal draft.

1998 - Michael Bishop - Kansas State - Toronto Argonauts

Bishop was dominant in two season with Kansas State, leading the team to 22 wins over 2 season against just 2 losses. He finished as runner-up in the Heisman to Texas running back Ricky Williams. Bishop was drafted in the 7th round by the New England Patriots in the 1999 draft, he spent two seasons with New England and saw limited action. After bumping around between Green Bay and Frankfurt Galaxy of NFL Europe Bishop signed with the Toronto Argonauts in time for the 2002 season. Bishop struggled in his first season with Toronto, throwing 7 touchdowns and 10 interceptions. Bishop filled in for the injured Damon Allen in 2004 and saw some playing action in the 97th Grey Cup victory for the Argonauts in Ottawa. Bishop has moved onto the Arena Football League with the Chicago Rush

1996 - Troy Davis - Iowa State - Edmonton Eskimos



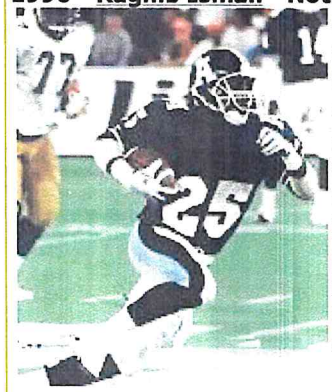
As a junior with Iowa in '96 Davis led the nation in rushing with 402 carries for 2,185 yards and 21 touchdowns in 11 games during the season. Davis became the first rusher in NCAA history to break the 2,000 yards rushing barrier in two seasons. Davis finished runner-up to Florida QB Danny Wuerffel in Heisman voting. He was drafted in the third round of the NFL draft by the New Orleans Saints. Davis spent three season with the Saints primarily on special teams, he was released following the 2001 season. Troy joined Hamilton in 2002 and rushed for 1,143 yards in his first season. Davis again broke the 1,000 yard barrier in 2003 with 1,206 yards and led the CFL in rushing in 2004 with 1,621 yards rushing and 10 touchdowns. Troy was traded to Edmonton in August 2005 and went on to win the Grey

Cup with the Eskimos.

1995 - Tommie Frazier - Nebraska - Montreal Alouettes

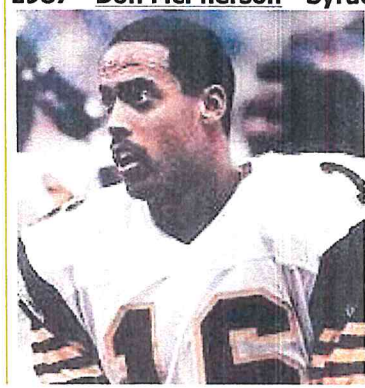
Tommie is a true legend in the illustrious history of Cornhusker Football. Frazier started all four seasons with Nebraska from 1992-95 leading the club to 3 straight National Championship Games - winning two. He was a dual threat throwing and running ball for the dominant Nebraska program. Frazier finished second in 1995 Heisman voting to Eddie George of Ohio State. Frazier running style did not fit with what NFL teams were looking for in a quarterback and he went un-drafted in the 1996 NFL draft. Tommie signed with the Montreal Alouettes in 1996 as a free agent. It was hoped he could learn under Tracy Ham who had a similar style to Frazier but blood clot issues that had affected Frazier in college arose again and after limited action the Nebraska grad retired from Professional football. He finished his CFL career completing 6 of 17 attempts for 55 yards with an interception. He has since returned to Nebraska as a running backs coach.

1990 - Raghib Ismail - Notre Dame - Toronto Argonauts



Considered by many to be one of the most entertaining players ever in college football. Ismail had world class speed and provided breathtaking moments for Notre Dame as a kick returner and receiver. Raghib dubbed "The Rocket" finished runner-up to BYU quarterback Ty Detmer for the Heisman but was widely considered to be the #1 draft pick of the NFL - the new ownership of the Toronto Argonauts had other ideas. Bruce McNall owner of the Los Angeles Kings along with star center Wayne Gretzky and comedian John Candy had just recently purchased the Argonauts from Harry Ornest. McNall was looking to make a splash and the electrifying Rocket was just the ticket. McNall signed Ismail to a huge contract and made headlines across North America. The league and Argonauts were definately on the map. 1991 was a dream season Ismail and the Argonauts won the Grey Cup. While his CFL career only lasted 1 more season, Ismail definitely made an impression in pro football affecting future salaries for all players to come. Ismail went on to play in the NFL with the Los Angeles Raiders, Carolina Panthers and Dallas Cowboys.

1987 - Don McPherson - Syracuse - Hamilton Tiger Cats

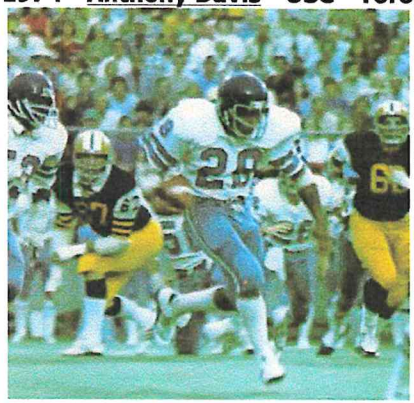


Syracuse University was a veritible CFL quarterback factory in the late 1980's. Before the likes of Marvin Graves, Kevin Mason and Kevin McDougall not to mention Donovan McNabb as Orangeman pivots was Don McPherson. McPherson was an incredible athlete he was a versatile quarterback with a strong arm and good instincts. Although he would finish runner-up to Notre Dames Tim Brown for the Heisman the future looked bright for Don. He was drafted by the Philadelphia Eagles and gained experience under Randall Cunningham but never did receive a fair shot to lead a team. Ultimately Don went to the CFL and joined the Hamilton Tiger Cats, he enjoyed some success but had a terrible year in 1993 not lasting the season for the club as the starting QB. After 1 more season with Ottawa he was out of the league, a dissapointing end to a promising career.

1986 - Paul Palmer - Temple - Toronto Argonauts

Paul had a brief stint with Toronto during the 1991 season. His statistical totals reflect just how brief his stay was: 5 yards on 2 carries.

1974 - Anthony Davis - USC - Toronto Argonauts



Before internet and the plethora of sports publications available today the measure of an athletes importance in sports was making the cover of Sport Illustrated the authority of pro sports in the 1970's. For USC running back Anthony Davis he made the cover 3 times as a collegiate stand-out, Davis finished runner-up to Ohio State tailback Archie Griffin for the 1974 Heisman. Davis was flamboyant, arrogant and extremely talented. Davis spent 1 season in the ill-fated World Football League with the Southern California Sun setting a league record with 16 touchdowns in 12 games. When the WFL folded Davis was left with several options, the NFL's New York Jets pursued Davis but money talks and the $1 million 5 year contract from the Toronto Argonauts was enough to bring Davis to Canada. The offence was not tailored for Davis and nagging injuries did not help what led to an abysmal season for Davis. He proceeded to buy his way out of the remainder of his contract and leave the CFL. Read about Anthony here...

1970 - Joe Theismann - Notre Dame - Toronto Argonauts

Joe Theismann won a Super Bowl with the Washingston Redskins and gone on to become a distinguished broadcaster. back in 1970 he was a star quaterback with the Notre Dame Fighting Irish, he finished runner-up in Heisman voting to Stanford quarterback Jim Plunkett. Joe was deemed a little small for the NFL but was drafted by Miami in 1971 in the fourth round. Contract negotiations with the Dolphins were trying on Theismann and when an offer arrived from the Argonauts to be the starting quarterback Joe signed in Toronto. He would lead the team to the Grey Cup in 1971 but the Argos were defeated. He would play in Toronto for two more seasons before going to the NFL signing with the Washington Redskins. As a Heisman runner-up Theismann brought talent and notoriety to the CFL in the heady days of the early 1970's. Read about Joe here...

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Canadian Football League
To enhance what is currently accessible for fans and would be fans on-line from a central location for each member club.
This site has no official affiliation with the Canadian Football League.

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Attendance 1995 to Present:

British Columbia Lions

B.C. Place - Capacity - 59,478
Head Coaches: Dave Ritchie, Joe Paopao, Greg Mohns, Steve Buratto, Wally Buono
Grey Cups: 2000
Notable Players: Damon Allen, Sean Millington, Jamie Taras. Lui Passaglia
Average Attendance:
1995 - 26,180. 1996 - 18,617. 1997 - 20,763. 1998 - 16,217. 1999 - 22,428. 2000 - 22,806. 2001 - 19,856.
2002 - 18,507. 2003 - 23,653. 2004 - 26,697. 2005 - 32,614.

Edmonton Eskimos

Commonwealth Stadium - Capacity - 60,081
Head Coaches: Ron Lancaster, Kay Stephenson, Don Matthews, Tom Higgins, Danny Macioca
Grey Cups: 2003
Notable Players: Henry Williams, Terry Vaughn, Ricky Ray, Ed Hervey, Sean Fleming, Willie Pless
Average Attendance:

1995 - 31,475. 1996 - 29,818. 1997 - 31,895. 1998 - 33,120. 1999- 34,241. 2000 - 33,912. 2001 - 35,510.
2002 - 38,161. 2003 - 41,228. 2004 - 39,031. 2005 - 41,933.

Calgary Stampeders

McMahon Stadium - Capacity - 37,317
Head Coaches: Wally Buono, Jim Barker, Matt Dunigan, Tom Higgins
Grey Cups: 1998, 2001
Notable Players: Doug Flutie, Jeff Garcia, Allen Pitts, Kelvin Anderson, Alondra Johnson, Mark McLoughlin
Average Attendance:
1995 - 26,740. 1996 - 23,559. 1997 - 27,848. 1998 - 30,040. 1999 - 31,641. 2000 - 35,973. 2001 - 33,534.
2002 - 32,670. 2003 - 32,178. 2004 - 30,401. 2005 - 31,270.

Saskatchewan Roughriders

Taylor Field - Capacity - 27,732
Head Coaches: Cal Murphey, Jim Daley, Danny Barrett
Grey Cups: None
Notable Players: Donald Narcisse, Bobby Jurasin, Reggie Slack, Paul McCallum, Reggie Hunt
Average Attendance:
1995 - 28,500. 1996 - 22,376. 1997 - 27,038. 1998 - 24,141. 1999 - 19,327. 2000 - 24,715. 2001 - 22,097.

2002 - 24,226. 2003 - 29,352. 2004 - 24,783. 2005 - 25,454.

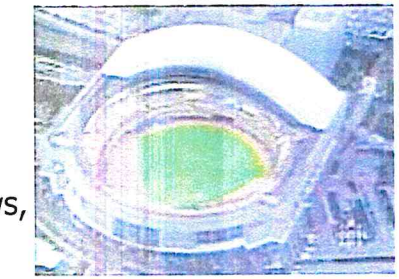
Winnipeg Blue Bombers

Canada Inns Stadium - Capacity - 29,503
Head Coaches: Cal Murphey, Jeff Reinebold, Dave Ritchie, Jim Daley
Grey Cups: None
Notable Players: Milt Stegall, Charles Roberts, Khari Jones, Juran Bolden, Lamar McGriggs
Average Attendance:
1995 - 22,888. 1996 - 25,799. 1997 - 21,483. 1998 - 22,683. 1999 - 21,807. 2000 - 25,461. 2001 - 28,144.
2002 - 27,560. 2003 - 27,225. 2004 - 24,496. 2005 - 24,317.

Hamilton Tiger Cats

Ivor Wynne Stadium - Capacity - 28,830
Head Coaches:Don Sutherin,Urban Bowman,Ron Lancaster,Greg Marshall
Grey Cups: 1999
Notable Players: Danny McManus, Darren Flutie, Troy Davis, Mike Morreale, Paul Osbaldiston, Joe Montford
Average Attendance:
1995 - 21,712. 1996 - 20,386. 1997 - 13,613. 1998 - 19,439. 1999 - 20,051. 2000 - 20,057. 2001 - 18,611.

2002 - 17,699. 2003 - 14,863. 2004 - 27,853. 2005 - 28,002.



Toronto Argonauts

Rogers Center - Capacity - 52,595

Head Coaches: Mike Farragelli, Bob O'Billovich, Don Matthews, Jim Barker, John Huard, Mike Clemons, Gary Etcheverry

Grey Cups: 1996, 1997, 2004

Notable Players: Mike Clemons, Doug Flutie, Paul Masotti, Damon Allen, Robert Drummond, Mike O'Shea

Average Attendance:

1995 - 16,659. 1996 - 20,466. 1997 - 18,226. 1998 - 18,910. 1999 - 22,045. 2000 - 17,381. 2001 - 15,785.

2002 - 20,539. 2003 - 15,083. 2004 - 25,813. 2005 - 30,196.

Ottawa Rough Riders (95-96) Renegades (2002- present)

Frank Clair Stadium - Capacity - 27,695

Head Coaches: Jim Gilstrap, John Payne, Joe Paopao

Grey Cups: None

Notable Players: David Archer, Kerry Joseph, Josh Ranek

Average Attendance:

1995 - 21,101. 1996 - 16,847. 2002 - 23,776. 2003 - 23,378. 2004 - 23,050. 2005 - 18,489.

Montreal Alouettes

Molson Stadium - Capacity - 20,202
Head Coaches: Bob Price, Charlie Taafe, Rod Rust, Don Matthews
Grey Cups: 2002
Notable Players: Tracy Ham, Mike Pringle, Jock Climie, Anthony Calvillo, Ben Cahoon, Stefan Reid
Average Attendance:
1996 - 22,227. 1997 - 9,585. 1998 - 16,147. 1999 - 19,317. 2000 - 19,461. 2001 - 19,601. 2002 - 20,002.
2003 - 20,202. 2004 - 23,879. 2005 - 23,655.

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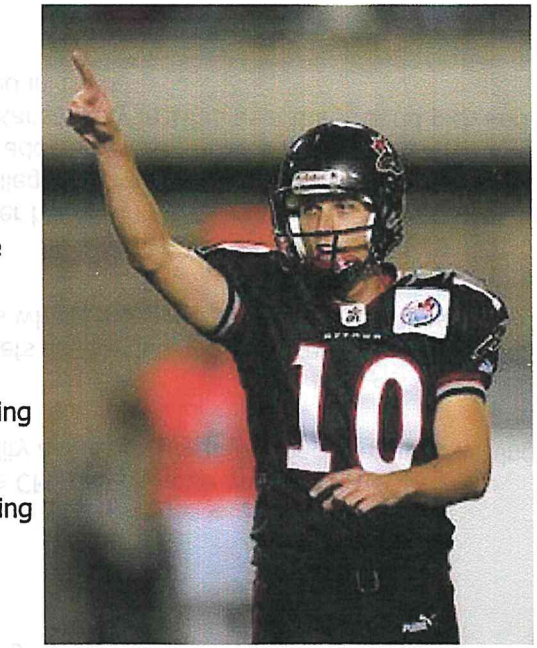
The Kansas City Chiefs and the Canadian Football League

NFL Canada News - Canoe.ca - January 13, 2004



The Kansas City Chiefs are one of the NFL's most storied franchises.

Yet the Chiefs have also had a close and complementary relationship with another football league -- the Canadian Football League -- for more than 40 years.

While players like Marc Boerigter (a Calgary Stampeder in 2001 before joining the Chiefs last season) tend to grab the headlines, over the team's history an almost reciprocal number of players have left the Chiefs to play in the CFL.

Over the past 40 years, 46 Chiefs have extended their careers by leaving the NFL to play in the CFL. Over that same period 53 CFL'ers (and 15 CFL coaches) have left Canada to join the Chiefs (an average of 2.5 players per season, from the Chiefs alone, switching leagues and sharing different kinds of football knowledge). Such efficient player transfer procedures have benefited teams in both leagues.

Long time Argonaut and CFL star Mike "Pinball" Clemons is one of the notable former Chiefs who extended his career in the CFL after leaving Kansas City. Clemons was on the Chiefs roster in 1987, and played for the Argonauts from 1989 to 2000. Clemons was the leagues Most Outstanding Player in 1990.

Grey Cup-winning quarterback Danny McManus played for the Chiefs in 1988 before starting his CFL career with Winnipeg in 1990. McManus was the leagues Most Outstanding Player in 2001. Long-time Chiefs Herman Heard (running back 1984-89) and Angelo Snipes (linebacker 1987-1990) also transitioned to the CFL later in their pro football careers. Snipes was a feared defender for the Ottawa Rough Riders when he arrived in 1991 registering 20 sacks in 1992 and 14 in 1993.

Notable CFL'ers who went on to play for Kansas City include Tom Flores (quarterback 1969), Vaughn Booker (defensive end 1994-97), Trent Green (quarterback 2001-02 spent the 1994 season with the B.C.Lions did not see any action), Joe Horn (wide receiver 1996-99, spent 1995 with the Memphis Mad Dogs leading the team with 1,415 yards receiving and 5 touchdowns), Warren Moon (quarterback 1999-00) and Central McClellion (defensive back, 2002).

Marv Levy (1978-82), Gunther Cunningham 1995-2000), Ted Cottrell (1981-82) and Rod Rust (1978-82) are among the 15 CFL coaches who have gone on to coach in Kansas City.

The Kansas City Chiefs (77,039) are the only team in the NFL to average more than 76,000 fans per game in each of the last eight seasons. The franchise has won American Football League, American Football Conference and Super Bowl championships.

Continued by CFL-H

Other notable players who share a connection with Kansas City include CFL Hall of Fame quarterback Tom Clements. The Notre Dame grad spent the 1980 season with Kansas City as a back-up quarterback before returning to the CFL with Hamilton in 1981.

In 2004, Scottish born kicker Lawrence Tynes (pictured) made the Chiefs as the clubs place kicker replacing retired Morten Anderson. Prior to arriving in the NFL Tynes spent two seasons with the Ottawa Renegades and was named a CFL all-star in 2003.

In 1994 the Las Vegas Posse signed 20 year old Tamarick Vanover after his sophomore season with Florida State as their marquee player. The enigmatic Vanover was a big name in college football and on a terrible Posse team he had decent totals. He tallied 385 yards receiving and 3 touchdowns in addition to his impressive special teams return totals, which included a 105 yard punt return. Vanover joined Kansas City in 1995 as a third round pick and had success primarily returning kicks for the team until he was released in 1998.

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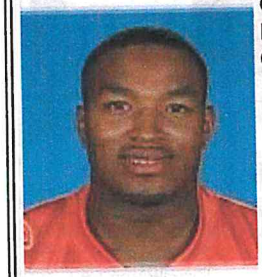


Casey Printers - Quarterback -
Ht: 6.02 Wt: 216 - Born: Desoto, TX
College: Florida A&M

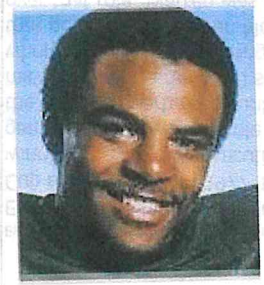
Most Outstanding Player: 2004

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
2004	BC	494	325	5088	65.8	35	10
2005	BC	192	119	1543	62.0	9	5

#1

Excerpt-EricFrancis-CalgarySun-24/09/2004
Printers leads in the dressing room as he does on the field. A brilliant runner who can keep the opposition off-balance with his ability to buy time and/or bolt downfield, he also throws well on the fly, sees the field clearly and thinks nothing of taking big hits. Some figure him to have the talents of a young Warren Moon and the charisma of a Jarome Iginla.

"I appreciate all the kind comparisons and nice things people have said but I don't try to live up to anybody's comparisons or expectations, except for my own," said the 23-year-old, who'll get a chance tonight to improve on his only shaky performance of the year, which came here against the Stamps.



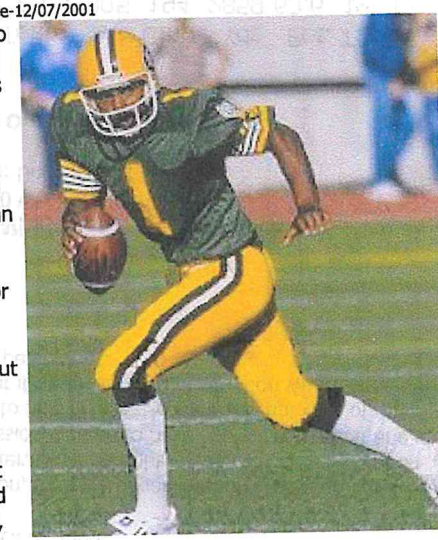
Warren Moon - Quarterback -
Ht: 6.03 Wt: 224 - Born: Los Angeles, CA
College: Washington State

Most Outstanding Player - 1983

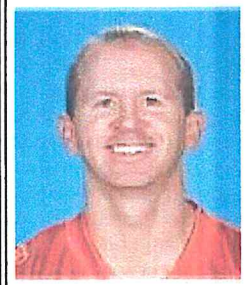
Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1978	Edm	173	89	1112	51.4	5	7
1979	Edm	274	149	2382	54.4	20	12
1980	Edm	331	181	3127	54.7	25	11
1981	Edm	378	237	3959	62.7	27	12
1982	Edm	562	333	5000	59.3	36	16
1983	Edm	664	380	5648	57.2	31	19

Excerpt-WarrenMoon-NFLHS.com-MoonMinute-12/07/2001
I remember when I first came into professional football, in Canada, I had a guy in front of me who was 36-years-old, a guy named Tom Wilkinson. I was much better athletically than him, but he was so much more experienced in the game, and especially the Canadian game, I didn't have any problem sitting behind him and watching him play and how he prepared for games.

Many of the things I learned about being a professional, I learned from him. I was patient, even though I knew that talent-wise I was better than him already. But there's a lot more to winning and being successful than just talent,



The obvious talk is the 6-ft. 2-in., 208-lb. Texan will bolt to the NFL in 2006. Truth is Printers and his agent have been thinking long and hard about ensuring he doesn't go south too soon, only to wind up returning like Henry Burris and Dickenson. Instead, he may play a handful more years in the CFL like his hero, Moon, did, which was what he hinted yesterday when talking about his community endeavors aimed at building the B.C. fan base long-term.



Dave Dickenson - Quarterback -
Ht: 5.11 Wt: 185 - Born: Grand Falls, Montana
College: University of Montana

Most Outstanding Player: 2000

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1997	Cal	49	36	407	73.5	2	1
1998	Cal	113	79	1170	69.9	10	4
1999	Cal	343	219	3048	63.8	16	10
2000	Cal	493	317	4636	64.3	36	6
2003	BC	549	370	5496	67.4	36	12
2004	BC	98	62	967	63.3	8	2
2005	BC	337	249	3277	73.9	21	5

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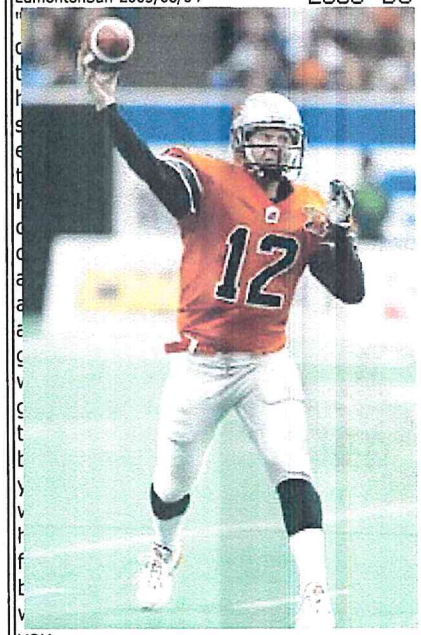
excerpt-RoberyTychkowski-EdmontonSun-2005/08/04



you think you've got him, he escapes. He dumps it here or there and they turn into big plays."

especially in playing the quarterback position.

I sat behind Tom for one full season, then we began sharing time, and when he retired I became the full-time starter. But I thought it was the perfect situation for me to transition into the professional game to have someone like that ahead of me, and he was very receptive to helping me. He was just that type of guy. And I think I learned from him that if there was ever a situation where someone was behind me, I would help that person out.

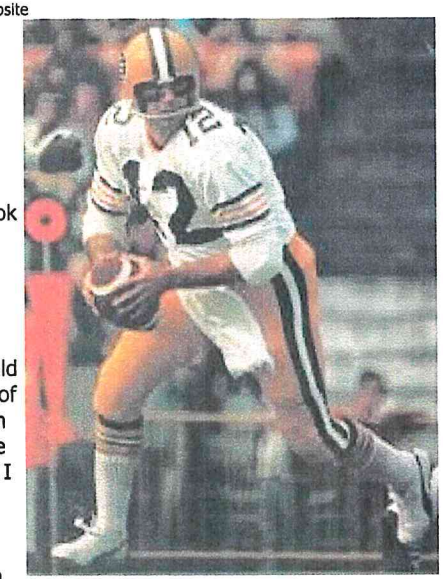
Tom Wilkinson - Quarterback -
Ht: 5.10 Wt: 190 - Born: Iowa
College: University of Wyoming

Most Outstanding Player: 1974

Yr	Team	Att	Cmp	Yds	Pct.	TD	Int
1975	Edm	305	194	2859	63.6	19	12

#12

Excerpt Craig Wallace-Toronto Argonauts website



Edmonton appeared in the Grey Cup every year from 1977-1982 winning the last 5 consecutive games. Tom had a key role being the starting quarterback until midway through the 1980 season when he pulled a hamstring. At that point young Warren Moon took over that role. Warren was an incredibly gifted athlete Tom recalls;

"Warren could throw the ball 800 yards farther then I could! He could run well and was a great student of the game. I didn't really teach him anything. Warren would watch me when I was playing and see what I would do in certain situations."

Tom's final season was 1981. He spent the year backing up Warren and saw most of his action holding for placekicking attempts by Dave Cutler. He had one bit of magic left in him however. Edmonton who had finished the 1981 season with a record of 14-1-1 took on 5-11 Ottawa in the Grey Cup. Experts were predicting this Grey Cup would be the most lopsided ever. Edmonton they predicted, could win easily by 30 points or more. It didn't happen. Ottawa

If all goes well, Dickenson will erase Tom Clements's 19-year old record of 67.58%.

"Ultimately, I probably will be (expendable) one day," Dickenson said after practice yesterday.

"But right now I figure I can play and win. Look at a guy like Damon Allen, still getting it done.

"As you get older, teams might decide to go with the younger guy. That's their choice. But I'm going to try and make it as tough as I can on them."

So he went out and systematically picked apart every defence he's faced this season, averaging 30 points a game and a league-high 9.3 yards per completion.

"That's where Dave is exceptional," said Buono, who's been a fan of Dickenson going back to their days together in Calgary. "He's not just dumping the ball to the backs for a high percentage, he's distributing the ball to all the receivers.

"He's tough and he's competitive, but his ability to execute the offence, get the ball into people's hands quickly, is so important."

coached by the wily George Brancato took a 20-0 lead by the 2nd quarter.

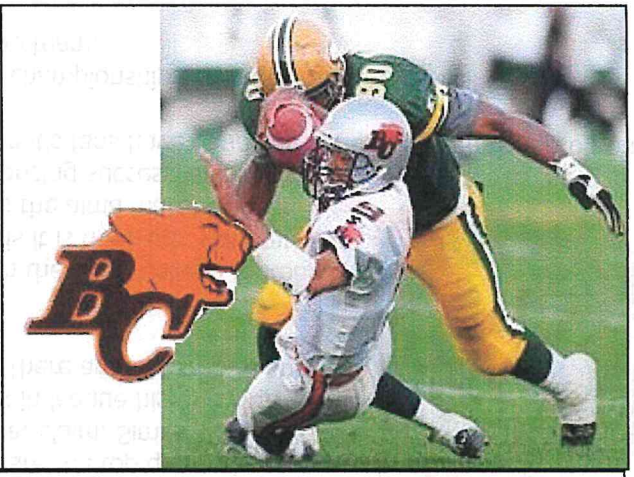
They were moving the ball with ease and had Warren Moon looking totally rattled and off his game. The greatest upset in professional football history was looming when Edmonton coach Hugh Campbell pulled Moon from the game and sent in Tom. "Wilkie" knew he had to settle the offence down and give them some confidence that they could move the ball against the fired up Rough Rider defense.

"Ottawa's game plan was designed around stopping Warren. He and I were totally different quarterbacks so when I went in I threw them off their game. Warren liked to throw deep and they were laying back waiting for the long passes. I went in and started to throw short passes, underneath the coverage.

Warren went back into the game in the 2nd half, which he should of, as he was the number one guy. He had a chance to watch me on the sidelines and see what I was doing and settle down. They still laid back waiting for the bombs and Warren continued what I did...just hit on short passes. He moved us down for a touchdown and then we got a turnover deep in their zone and picked up another. He played great in the second half and we won the game.

CFL

Cal-State Fullerton



Allen Pringle Pitts

Montreal
Toronto
Hamilton
Ottawa

Winnipeg
Saskatchewan
Edmonton
Calgary
BritishColumbia

Baltimore
Shreveport
Las Vegas

1970'S

1980'S
1990'S

Grey Cup

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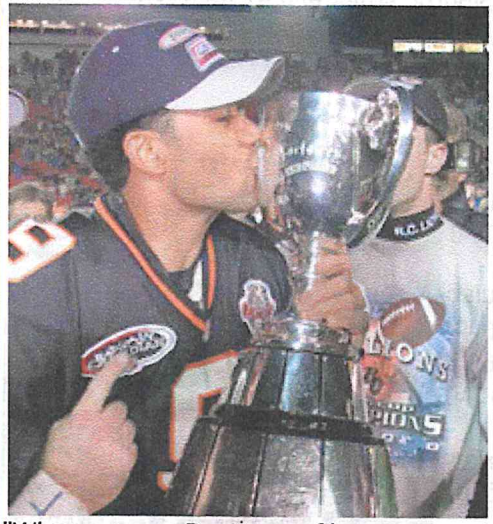
Mike Pringle is acknowledged for breaking the CFL career rushing mark in 2004.

It would not be far fetched for a fan of Canadian Football to declare the top quarterback in league history as Damon Allen. Certainly the statistics support that claim. Similarly Mike Pringle could certainly be counted as arguably the greatest running back in league history. How about the exploits of Allen Pitts as the greatest receiver in CFL history; there are statistics to support all of these claims.

How about the fact that each of these CFL legends came through the same college football program in California in the 1980's? As remarkable as that sounds it is the truth. Cal State Fullerton a school that suspended it's football program in 1992 is the alma mater of Allen, Pringle and Pitts. The Cal State Fullerton Titans experienced surprising success with their program relative to the size of the school in the 1980's and the Canadian Football League and it's fans have definitely benefited from that program.

Under coach Gene Murphey the Titans captured two conference championships and four runner-up finishes between 1983-89-when each of Allen, Pringle and Pitts spent time with the team.

Damon Allen –



Graduated Cal State Fullerton in 1984.

Allen set seven single season records in his senior year with the Titans and was named a 1st team Pacific Coast Athletic Association All-Star in 1984.

Damon led the team to two PCAA championships and broke a 26-year old NCAA record with only 3 interceptions in over 300 attempts. He finished 16th in Heisman Trophy voting in 1984 along with anchoring the pitching staff for the Cal-State baseball team. Damon joined the Edmonton Eskimos in 1985 following the path of Warren Moon and the rest is football history.

excerpted from – Damon Allen on the brink of becoming top passer in pro football history – By Dan Ralph – Canadian Press – September 1, 2006

He continued playing quarterback in high school and led his team to two league championships, yet inadvertently caught the eye of the football staff at California State University, Fullerton.

"When we saw Damon on film, we were looking at someone else and I asked, 'Who the heck is this kid?'" said Gene Murphy, the former head coach at Cal State Fullerton. "We were going to return the film and I told them to get down there to see that quarterback and said if he was even close to five-foot-10 to offer him a scholarship.

"They called me back and told me he was close to six foot but they didn't tell me he only weighed something like 130 pounds. But he's no kid anymore, he's a big-time man."

Allen led Cal State Fullerton to a pair of Big West Conference titles (1983-'84) after first tutoring under quarterbacks coach Steve Mariucci (1980-'82), who went on to be an NFL head coach with San Francisco and Detroit.

Mariucci says he will be in Hamilton on Monday to watch Allen make football history.

"I'll bet he didn't weigh more than 139 pounds when he got to college but he was a heck of a thrower," Mariucci said. "You wouldn't think that with the slender physique that he had and I'm being polite - he was a skinny bugger - he could really throw it."

In 1984, Allen finished 16th in voting for the Heisman Trophy behind eventual CFL star Doug Flutie, who was then at Boston College. Allen attended the Senior Bowl, U.S. college football's showcase all-star game, and completed 6-of-8 passes for 50 yards and a touchdown while adding 20 yards rushing on three carries.

But Allen was bypassed in the NFL draft and looked to Canada to embark on a pro career in 1985. Like Moon, Allen signed as a free agent with Edmonton and in 1987 replaced an injured Matt Dunigan to lead the Eskimos to a thrilling 38-36 Grey Cup win over Toronto, earning the first of his three game MVP honours.

Allen was more than just a star quarterback in university. He also was a solid pitcher, posting a 3-2 record and 3.60 earned-run average in 19 appearances (six starts) in '84 when Cal State Fullerton captured the College World Series. He was a seventh-round draft pick that year of the World Series-champion Detroit Tigers, but decided to remain in

school.
"The Tigers were trying to sign him furiously, they were on our campus day in and day out and I had the scout, an old son of a buck, escorted off the campus by a policeman," Murphy said with a chuckle. "In the major leagues, you have to sign (a baseball contract) before the first day of class, after which you can't sign.
"So the first day of class comes and Damon is at school and is going to play football. So I took a Tigers cap and burned it on the grounds. But the last thing that scout said to me was this: 'What a disservice you're doing to that young man. Look at him. Do you think he'll last playing football?' Who would've known that 26 years later he would be in this situation?
"You can never measure what's inside a person, their heart and their soul. I've coached for 43 years but you talk about competitive desire. I mean, Damon walks into a huddle and people know they can do it. He's kind of laid back and doesn't say a lot, but boy, does he compete. He has that inner drive."

Allen has gone on to break Warren Moon's career pro football passing yardage record with over 70,000 yards passing and counting.

Mike Pringle –

Graduated Cal-State Fullerton in 1989

Drafted into the NFL in 1990 – Atlanta Falcons – 6th round 139 overall

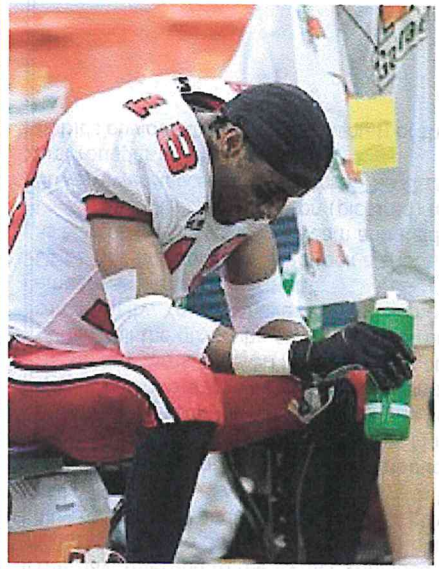
Pringle started his college career at Washington State. He transferred to Cal-State Fullerton for a better opportunity to carry the ball.

In 1989 Pringle had the 4th most all-purpose yards in NCAA football history with 2,690 while with Cal-State Fullerton leading the nation. As a senior Mike rushed for 1,727 yards. Pringle set a NCAA record since eclipsed in 1989 with 626 yards gained in consecutive games.

In 1990, the Atlanta Falcons drafted Pringle in the sixth round, but he saw limited duty. In 1991, he was the last player cut by Atlanta. After splitting his next year between the Edmonton Eskimos and the World League champion Sacramento Surge, Pringle signed with the expansion Sacramento Gold Miners in 1993.

Pringle played with Sacramento, Baltimore, Montreal and Edmonton he retired after the 2004 season as the all-time leading rusher with 16,424 yards. Pringle also holds the league record for rushing yards in a season with 2,065 in 1998 with Montreal He is the only back in league history to eclipse 2,000 yards in a season.

Allen Pitts –



Graduated Cal-State Fullerton in 1985

Allen Pitts had a solid career at Cal-State Fullerton. He left the football program in 1986 and had a failed try-out with the Los Angeles Rams of the NFL in 1986 and '87. Roy Shivers Player Personnel Director for the Calgary Stampeders at the time convinced Allen to come to Canada in May of 1990 and he enjoyed extraordinary success over 10+ seasons.

In 1994 he enjoyed the single greatest season for a receiver in league history with 2,036 receiving yards and 21 touchdowns. When he retired in 2000 Pitts held the league record for receiving yards with 14,891.

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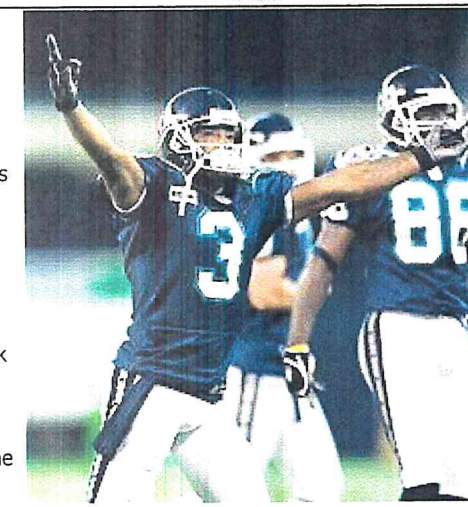
No Guarantees with NFL Castoffs

Michael Petrie - Calgary Herald - May 25, 2005



Credentials may not spell success

Those who pledge allegiance to the Winnipeg Blue Bombers know there's no such thing as a can't-miss National Football League castoff.

Back in 1994, the Bombers scored a coup when they landed quarterback Todd Marinovich, a star at University of Southern California and first-round pick of the Los Angeles Raiders.

On the first day of training camp in Brandon, however, Marinovich stepped in a gopher hole and wrecked his knee. Rather than have the Bombers' medical staff examine the injury, he returned to California and his own doctor.

Marinovich never returned . . . until 1999. He joined the B.C. Lions for a brief stint that was terminated when his well-documented off-field troubles flared up.

So, Calgary Stampeders fans should drool with caution at the thought of cornerback Rashard Anderson -- a Carolina Panthers first-rounder in 2000 -- joining the club.

"The upside is that he turns out like Juran Bolden," Stamps general manager said Tuesday, referring to the former Winnipeg stud cornerback currently playing in the NFL. "There is no downside because 68 players come to camp and only 40 make the final roster. If he ends up being able to play, we have a guy with a lot of physical tools. if he doesn't, we have other guys to look at."

The Toronto Argonauts received contributions from four NFL first-rounders last season, en route to a Grey Cup title.

Argos director of player personnel Greg Mohns is a huge fan of NFL castoffs and was the man who brought Marinovich to Vancouver.

"The bottom line is: All it costs is a plane ticket," said Mohns. "If a guy doesn't pan out, if he screws up, ship him home. That's what I did with Marinovich . . . he screwed up and I sent him home.

"If the guy turns out, you have a good football player. Their skill level is good enough to be playing in the NFL.

"Almost all the guys who come up here from the NFL have a chink in their armour -- whether it's character or injury or he's a salary-cap casualty. You just have to spend some time, do some research and talking to know he's not going to come in and be an embarrassment. It's worth it."

Of 11 NFL first-rounders who took a shot at the CFL since 1988, running back John Avery has been the most productive. Others, such as Marcus Nash, Rashaan Salaam and Reidel Anthony, came and went with barely a whisper.

Lawrence Phillips, Andre Rison (pictured) and Marinovich reverted to their old troubled selves, while Bernard Williams and R.Jay Soward were decent contributors. The Ottawa Renegades also recently signed Dimitrius Underwood, who was a Minnesota Vikings first rounder in 1999,

But it's obvious that credentials south of the border do not translate to instant success in the CFL.

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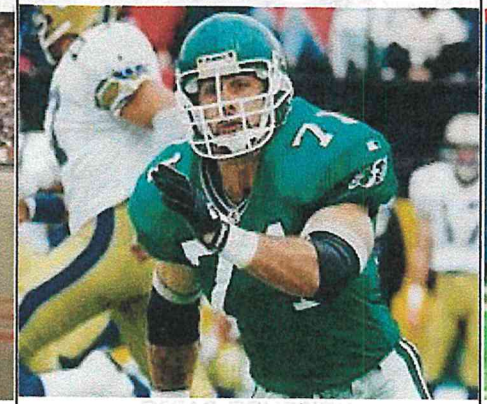

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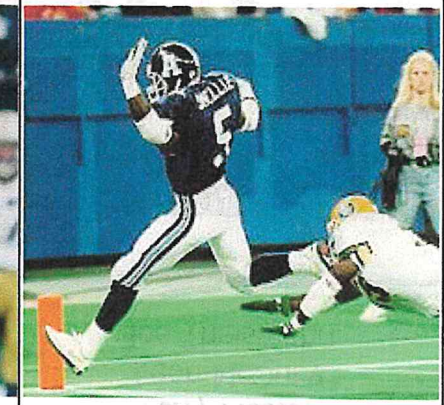

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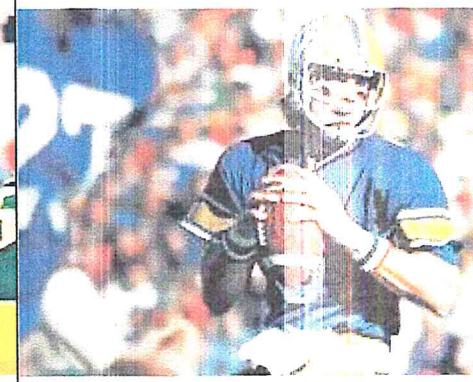

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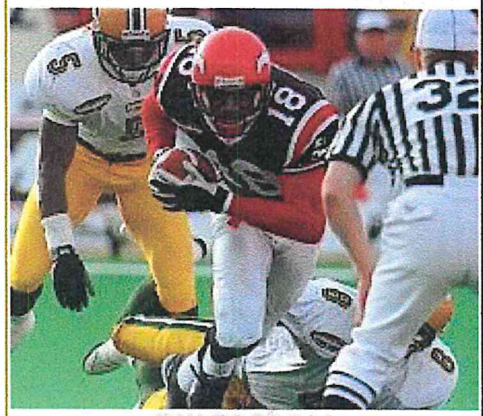

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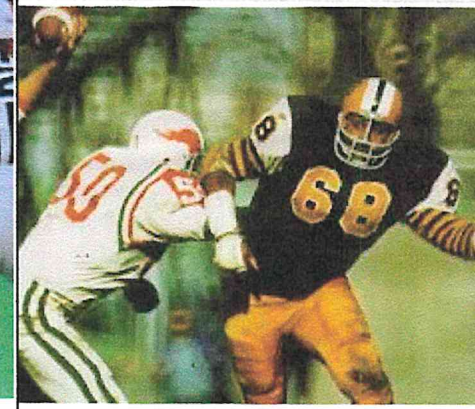

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Bonus Material

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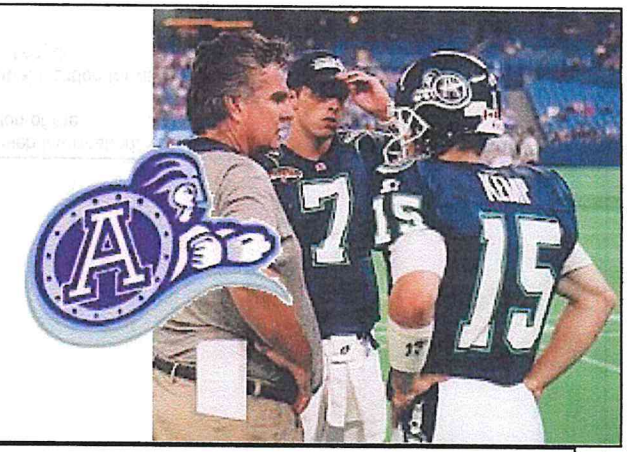
GREY CUP



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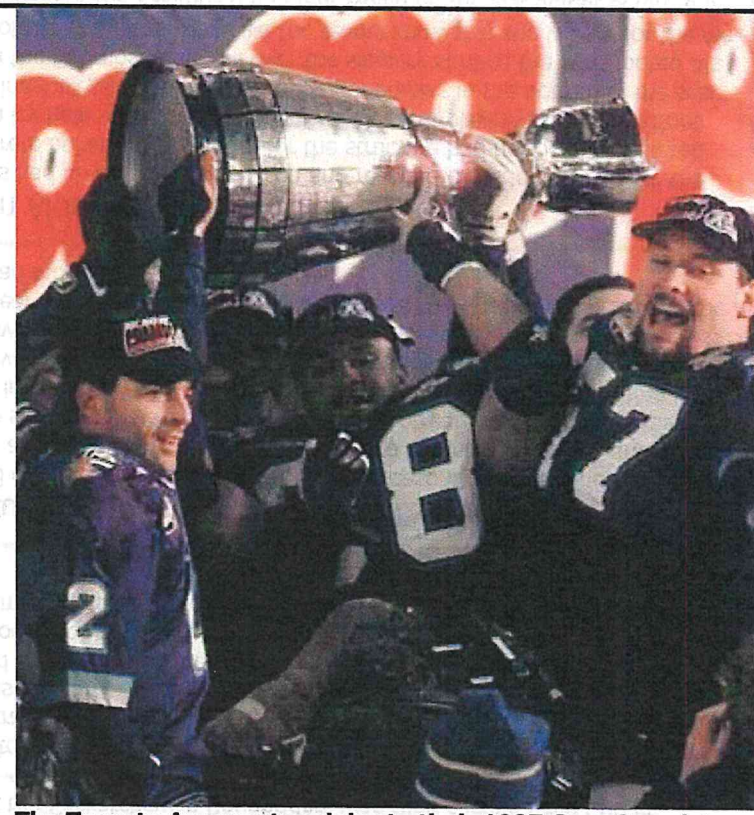

The Toronto Argonauts celebrate their 1997 Grey Cup victory.

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Rider Pride Nationwide in 1989

In 1989 after 23 years without the Saskatchewan Roughriders won their second Grey Cup in franchise history. A thrilling 43-40 victory over the Hamilton Tiger Cats in what many consider the greatest championship game in CFL history. The game was an offensive display with Saskatchewan pivot Kent Austin and Hamilton's Mike Kerrigan trading big plays at the new Skydome in Toronto. Tiger Cat receiver Tony Champion put up a tremendous effort in a losing cause playing with broken ribs and hauling in two scores one of which widely considered the greatest catch in football. It was kicker Dave Ridgway who would seal the victory for the underdog Roughriders with no time remaining to clinch the victory. Saskatchewan had upset Calgary and the 16-2 Edmonton Eskimos to make it to the Grey Cup. Recap the game with an article from Allan Maki.

25 years later... Als return to Grey Cup glory in 2002 By CFL-H

The Montreal Alouettes ceased operations on the eve of the 1986 season. Montreal had last won the Grey Cup in 1977 versus Edmonton with a 41-6 triumph. Montreal returned to the league in 1996 and made it to the title game in 2000 only to come up short versus the B.C.Lions 28-26. Montreal the class of the Eastern division returned to the Championship in 2002 to face the Edmonton Eskimos. Edmonton was hosting the game and had the decided home field advantage. However, in the end it was Montreal who captured the Grey Cup 25-16. Anthony Calvillo efficiently delivered the ball to a wealth of receivers including Jermaine Copeland, Ben Cahoon, Pat Woodcock. Montreal was too much for Edmonton and for the first time since 1977 the Alouettes were Grey Cup champions. Read more about the game.

Staples contribute to an Alouettes rout in 1977

In 1977 the Montreal Alouettes had an outstanding season and reached the title game which the would be hosting in their concrete behemoth. The roof for the structure had not been completed and the elements produced an icy field with little traction. Two Alouette players (Tony Proudfoot and Wally Buono) with a little ingenuity came up with the idea of staples in the bottom of the teams cleats. The tactic worked, with the Eskimos sliding all over the slippery surface the sure-footed Als waltzed to a 41-6 destruction of the Alouettes. Little did the teams know that the victory for the Als would be their last for 25 seasons. For the Eskimos the defeat would be the last defeat before a 5 season championship dynasty. It was a classic game. Read more from a Sports Illustrated feature on the game.

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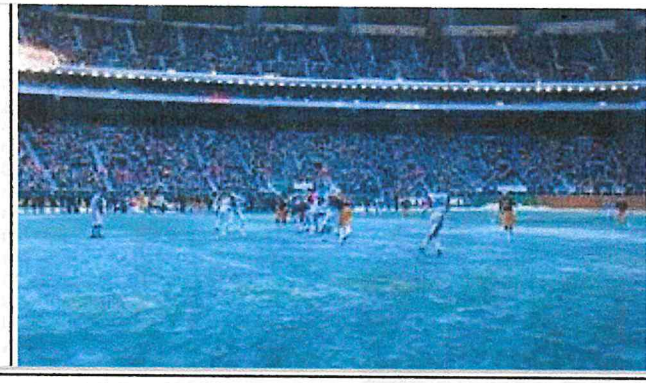
Montreal	41		Edmonton	6

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Sports Illustrated - December 1977

The snow stopped for Sonny

Sonny Wade's passes and Don Sweet's kicks led Montreal to the Grey Cup title

Wade won the MVP award as he blitzed Edmonton with 22 completions in the Alouettes' 41–6 win

If it snows, the Eskimos will win. If it rains, then it'll be the All-Wets." That was the smart tip last week as football fans from all over Canada converged on La Belle Province for Sunday's 65th annual Grey Cup game—that elderly, spry, sub-Arctic ancestor of the Super Bowl. The site was Montreal's 68,511-seat Olympic Stadium, and the contenders were the Edmonton Eskimos, champions of the Canadian Football League's Western Conference, and the Montreal Alouettes, their Eastern counterparts.

Well, it snowed and snowed, and then snowed some more.

Eskimo hopes surged, but then the snow stopped and game day broke clear and a frosty 16° F. Though there was no rain to fulfill the tipsters' prophecy, the Eskimos might just as well have stayed in their igloos. Edmonton, which had yielded only one point in its two previous games, coughed up a season's worth as the All-Wets crushed the Eskimos 41–6. Edmonton hardly helped itself by committing nine turnovers, five more than Montreal. It was scarcely an esthetically pleasing 60 minutes of football, but then Americans ought not to be too scornful—after all, there hasn't been a really well-executed Super Bowl since the Namath Jets did in Baltimore nine years ago.

Once an American's eyes got adjusted to the outsized field and alien rules of Canadian football, it became clear that the Alouettes were head and shoulders the best football team in the north country. Montreal Quarterback Sonny Wade, a veteran from that Virginia powerhouse, Emory & Henry, completed 22 of 40 passes for 340 yards (and only one interception) to win the Most Valuable Player award. Placekicker Don Sweet, a native of Vancouver who played at Washington State, hit on six of seven field goals to tie the CFL game record in that department and accounted for two "singles" on other kicks. That won him the Outstanding Canadian Player honors. The Montreal defense, playing a heads-up mix of zone and man-to-man coverage, held Edmonton Quarterback Bruce Lemmerman (you, of course, remember him from San Fernando State and, very briefly, the Atlanta Falcons) to a paltry 74 yards on five for 22 passes. In fact, the total Edmonton offensive production amounted to only 102 yards. Montreal amassed 424.

To some extent, the frozen AstroTurf led to the general sloppiness of play—the north end zone, all 40 acres of it, was slick as a hockey rink. If Guy Lafleur had been playing for Edmonton and had remembered to bring his skates, it might have been a ball game.

For all that, very few fans went away totally disappointed. Championship games generate a mystique all their own and confer a sense of status on all who attend, win or lose. They also drain bank balances with lightning speed, and with the top ticket at the Big O, as Montrealers call the Olympic Stadium, going for $24, including a $3 service charge, this game set a revenue record for Canadian football.

As the triumphant Als skittered and slid back to their locker room, fans cascaded onto the field to rip at the red-white-and-blue goalposts (Alouette colors, not traitorous pro-Americanism) or to take long belly whoppers on the frozen sections of the field. And CFL Commissioner Jake Gaudaur presented the Grey Cup to the winning co-captains. Actually, it wasn't the real Grey Cup, but a replica. That venerable trophy, which over the years has been lost and found again, and used as a champagne goblet, has been honorably retired to the Canadian football museum in Hamilton, Ontario.

As if the snow—Quebec's first blizzard of the season—weren't enough, Montreal's transportation workers did their own dirty best to foul up the festivities by calling a strike for Grey Cup weekend. One of the prime assets of the Big O is that the Metro runs straight to the door. Until this year the Alouettes played all their home games at the Autostade, a remotely located stadium with poor parking facilities. Attendance in the old days, even when the Alouettes had a winning team, rarely exceeded 20,000. This year, though, the Als packed them in, hitting over 60,000 for half of their

continued

sold out.

A case could be made—and 22 million Canadians are only too delighted to make it—that the Grey Cup beats the Super Bowl all hollow, both as a championship game and as a spectacle. Certainly when it comes to historical resonance, raucous hijinks, pregame hoopla and just plain wide-open, non-stop football the Canadian game is No. 1. "In terms of national impact," says Minnesota Viking Coach Bud Grant, the only man to lead teams into both the Grey Cup and the Super Bowl, "the Grey Cup is far greater."

The Grey Cup got its start back in 1909 when Earl Grey, tea entrepreneur and Governor-General of Canada, donated a $48 silver cup for "the amateur rugby football championship" of the nation. Just as American football was exclusively a college sport back in the days of Walter Camp, Pop Warner and Percy Haughton, so it was in Canada. The dominating team of those early years was that of the University of Toronto, whose Varsity Blues won the first three cup games.

In 1935 the Grey Cup became a professional show with the importation of American players. Until 1948, however, Toronto by storm for the big game. They knocked good gray Toronto on her ladylike ear. Replete with chaps, spurs, Stetsons and cow ponies, they conducted ox roasts and hot-cake orgies on the street corners, even galloped their steeds through the lobby of the Royal York Hotel. The tone was set.

Last week in Montreal, even though Calgary was not playing, Stampeder fans were everywhere—belting banjos and bluegrass in the elevator banks of downtown hotels, guzzling hooch in the saloons and boîtes and generally raising a good-natured brand of Holy Ned. There were thousands of other celebrants—Montrealers in their outlandish *habitant* toques, Eskimo-lovers in yellow-and-green hard hats (Alberta is oil country), even a couple of quasi-Sasquatches in kelly-green and buttercup-yellow suits, spooking the *jeunes filles* in the lobbies. Though snow was pelting down the afternoon before the game, the Grey Cup parade went off as scheduled, with floats flouncing and bagpipes skirling through the icy canyons of downtown Montreal. As Canadians have long observed, the Grey Cup serves as a kind of northland Mardi Gras—a final blowout before the deadening dark of winter sets in.

The Grey Cup serves as Canada's Mardi Gras, a final blowout before the dark of winter sets in

Grey Cup's future—the specter of Que bec separatism. If the province final does pull out of the national federation and many astute observers feel that it bound to happen, even if only gradual and nonviolently over perhaps the ne 10 years—it could not only spell the en of Canada as a whole but, almost cer tainly, the end of Canadian football. A ready there is talk of Montreal getting National Football League franchise in th next expansion, and Montreal Mayo Jean Drapeau is outspoken in his desir for one. Few football men on either sid of the border doubt that the city, with population of just over two million, coul support an NFL franchise. But of the oth er eight teams in the CFL, only Toron and, perhaps, Vancouver could turn th trick. Most of the CFL franchises are sick ly, if not downright moribund. Canadia television pays peanuts compared to U.S. networks—last year's Grey Cup, fo example, generated only $245,000 in T revenue—and even with a 16-game sea son, gate receipts cannot begin to pa off expenses, although CFL players ear less than half what their America cousins do.

If any Canadian team does join leagues, it would logically be Montrea But that decision lies in the hands of Sa Berger, the 77-year-old Ottawa lawy and football aficionado who bought th team for a CFL-record $1.5 million i 1969. Many Canadians thought at th time that it was a bum gamble. After al the Als had not even played in the Gre Cup since 1956. But Berger's bucks an determination paid off: Montreal ha made it to the Grey Cup four times 1970, '74, '75 and now '77—losing only the 1975 game.

"The Montreal franchise was sick an going to die," Berger says. "Buying it w my contribution to Canadian unity. Eve in 1969, people were leaving Quebec decided I was going to set an example by moving *into* the province." If Berge means what he says, then it would seem unlikely that Montreal will soon be matched against the Colts or the Cow boys. But, as the man says, money talks—perhaps even more loudly in fracture and inflation-frazzled Canada than south of the border.

If so, its first utterance will no doubt be: "Welcome aboard, Als."

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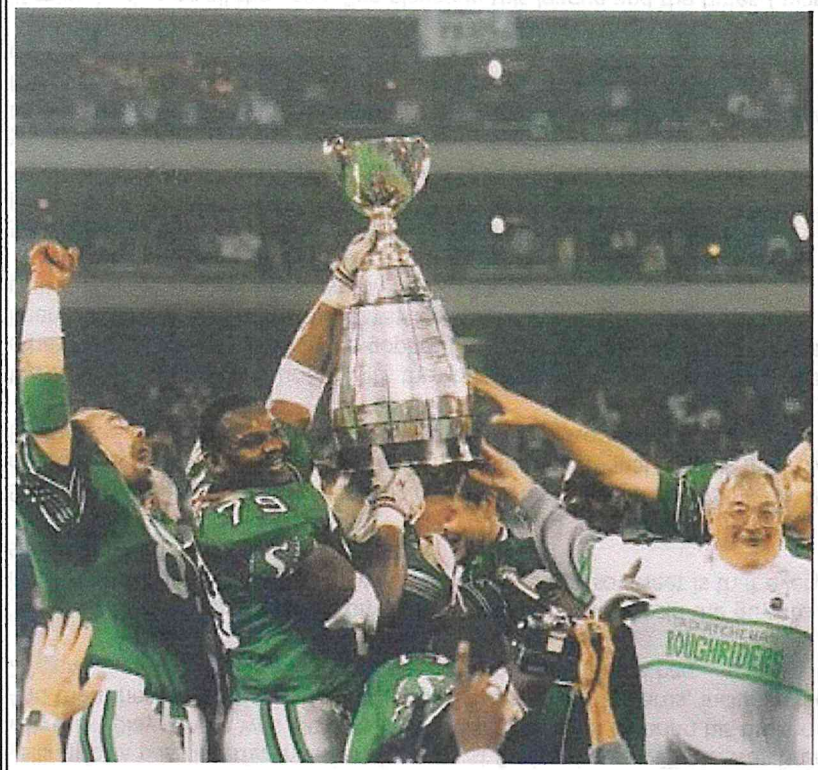
Destiny Finally Arrives for long-suffering Franchise - By Allan Maki - Calgary Herald November 27, 1989

Toronto - Bob Poley was never worried. Not with 44 seconds left on the game clock and the score tied 40-40. The Grey Cup, he told his team-mates, was in the bag and bound for Regina. Kent Austin was at quarterback. Dave Ridgway was on the sidelines. What could be better than this.



"I knew the way Kent was playing we'd get in field-goal range for Ridgway, or even close enough for him to kick a single," said Polley, the veteran lineman. "we didn't want overtime. We wanted the win and I had a feeling we'd get it."

What a feeling it was. Austin marched his Saskatchewan Roughriders against Hamilton in the final seconds of a screaming game to set up the winning field goal. Poley made the snap. glen Suitor made the hold. And, Ridgway, the best pressure kicker in the game, drilled the points that put an entire province into green heaven.

There may never be a Grey Cup to rival Sunday's. Not for drama or scoring or drop-dead excitement. This was the wildest ever played between two football teams who thought they were the Lakers and Celtics.
Up and down the court they flew, slamming 80 (it was tied 40-40) points on the Skydome scoreboard until Ridgway hit a three-pointer at the buzzer. It was at that very moment when Saskatchewan exploded into ecstasy. Twenty-three years of frustration blown away in a single evening.

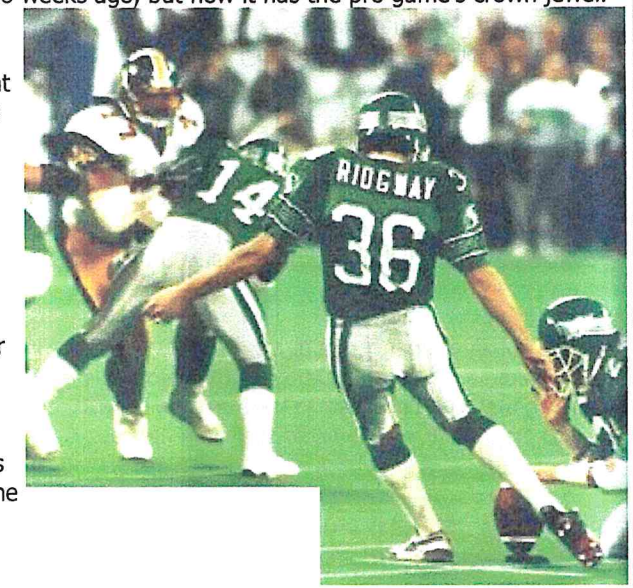
"Pinch me!" shouted defensive back Richie Hall. "I'm on cloud nine. Our team is the champion of the CFL, and could anyone have picked a better finish than this?"
There were 100 moments to remember from yesterday's game, but in the end there was only one - the 'Riders doing what they had to do to win their first title since 1966. Strangely, they had struggled early on, losing games and confidence, before beating Calgary with a fourth-quarter touchdown and then crushing Edmonton in the West Division final.
It was then that Saskatchewan came to the Grey Cup intent on winning and winning like champions.

"You have to applaud their effort," said Tiger-Cats' Grover Covington. "It was like they never thought they were going to lose."

This was a league final scripted by Disney. The last seconds were jammed full of irony and action. There was Hamilyo coach Al Bruno yelling for a pass interference penalty against Saskatchewan. There was Bruno clapping his hands when he got exactly that call on the very next play. There was Ticat receiver Tony Champion ignoring his broken ribs and catching a pass to knot the score at 40-40. And then there was Austin completing three passes for 48 yards, including two to unheralded Mark Guy, to move his club to Hamilton 26-yard line, where Ridgway came and put everything in the bag.

"When we got in the huddle on offence for that last drive, I told the guys to concentrate block out the noise," Austin said later. "I knew if we just got close enough we'd win. What makes this so sweet is that everybody on this team came up with a big play when the situation called for it."

Sweeter still was the Grey Cup trophy presentation to a club and its people who have fielded nothing but nothing for more than two decades. The University of Saskatchewan lost in the national football final two weeks ago, but now it has the pro game's crown jewel. Pinch us. Saskatchewan is the football capital of our world.



We've laughed and had our fun with the "riders and their hayseed fans. What other football team would have a gopher for a mascot? Yet there has always been something admirable in the way Saskatchewan fans have supported a club that once skipped the playoffs for 12 years.

In any other city, the 'Riders would have been left for dead. In Regina, they have always been nurtured and loved. Like champions.
So when Al Bruno took to crying over bad calls and lucky breaks after yesterday's game, it all seemed so wrong. The 'Riders never moaned when they were losing. They didn't complain. They took their lumps and waited for the day when destiny called and the Grey Cup would be delivered to their door.

"I think back over all the years I've played in this league and the times I was with this team and we couldn't make the playoffs, and then I think, 'We're the Grey Cup champions,'" said a smiling Poley. "This is the greatest thing that has ever happened to me. It's just incredible."
He looked and sounded like a winner.

	Montreal	25		Edmonton	16

East:
Toronto
Hamilton
Ottawa
Montreal

West:
Winnipeg
Saskatchewan
Calgary
British Columbia
Edmonton

CFL Home

Grey Cup - 2002 - Commonwealth Stadium - Montreal 25 - Edmonton 16

FIRST QUARTER
After the two teams exchanged punts on their first possessions, Baker punted the ball through the Edmonton end zone for a single on Montreal's second possession.
The slippery field at Edmonton's Commonwealth Stadium has made it difficult for either team to move the ball.
The Eskimos mustered just 11 yards of offence in the opening quarter. Players from both teams have been experimenting with different types of shoes in an effort to gain traction.

SECOND QUARTER
Calvillo hit Canadian Pat Woodcock for a 99-yard touchdown pass early in the second quarter, the longest TD reception in Grey Cup history.With the Als' on their own 11, Calvillo faked a hand-off, dropped back and found Woodcock crossing the middle at about the Als' 30. Woodcock pulled in the ball and raced down the field, outracing the Eskimos' Malcolm Frank.
Baker hit a 42-yard field goal with 1:15 left to cap first-half scoring at 11-0.
The Als dominated the first half. Montreal had 214 yards of offence in the half while the Eskimos gained just 88 yards.

THIRD QUARTER
On their first drive of the half, Eskimos QB Ricky Ray found Jason Tucker on a 32-yard pass that gave the Eskimos the ball on the Montreal 18. Edmonton scored when Ray hit a wide-open Rick Walters to make it 11-7. The Eskimos cut the lead to 11-10 thanks to a Montreal turnover. Calvillo fumbled the ball and the Eskimos recovered on their own 47-yard line. Then, Troy Mills, who came in for the ineffective John Avery, single-handedly carried the Eskimos down the field. On his first two carries of the season, Mills ran the ball down to Alouettes nine-yard line.
Sean Fleming kicked the field goal to cut the Als' lead to one with 6:06 left in the third quarter.

FOURTH QUARTER
A 47-yard Jeremaine Copeland touchdown reception had given the Als an 18-10 lead with 11:39 left in the quarter.
With the ball on the Eskimos' 53-yard line, Als quarterback Anthony Calvillo escaped some heavy pressure and found Copeland, who received a key block from Ben Cahoon. Ray threw a 17-yard touchdown pass to a wide-open Ed Hervey to cut the Als' lead to 18-16. Ray's pass to Terry Vaughn for the two-point conversion was knocked down by Timothy Strickland to maintain the Als' two-point lead. With 12 seconds remaining Jermaine Copeland ran back the Eskimos' on-side kick attempt to make the score 25-16.

Rushing:
Mtl -- Phillips 11-40, Calvillo 1-12, Heppell 1-4
Edm -- Mills 12-87, R. Ray 7-25, Avery 8-6

Receiving:
Mtl -- Woodcock 2-119, Copeland 3-101, Cahoon 2-20, Phillips 2-19, Haskins 1-2
Hall 1-minus 1
Edm -- Tucker 8-127, Brazell 3-65, Mills 3-41, Hervey 2-31, Vaughn 4-30, Walters 2-29, Avery 2-1

Passing:
Mtl -- Calvillo 11-31, 260 yds, 2 TDs, O ints
Edm -- R. Ray 24-46, 324 yds, 2 TDs, 1 int

Most Outstanding Player: Anthony Calvillo

Most Outstanding Canadian: Pat Woodcock

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McCallum puts best foot forward

Lions kicker stars in Grey Cup win

Sean Fitz-Gerald
CanWest News Service

Sunday, November 19, 2006

WINNIPEG — It was not that long ago when someone drove past Paul McCallum's home and threatened to burn it down. It was right around the time two other men dumped a load of manure nearby and a province of angry fans forced him into exile, where he flourished and forced them to watch last night as he became a Grey Cup champion.

Television highlights broadcast across the country will show the 36-year-old kicker, an exiled son of Saskatchewan, drenched in champagne after nailing a record-tying six field goals to lift the B.C. Lions to the Canadian Football League title over the Montreal Alouettes.

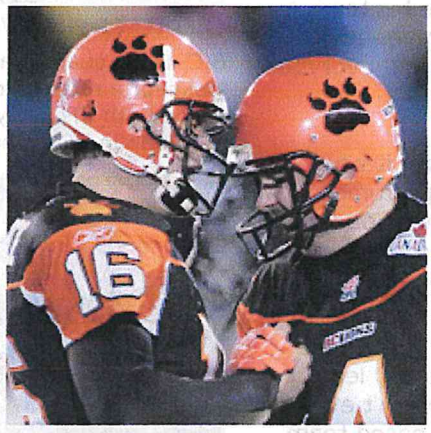
The Lions won 25-14 in front of a sellout crowd of 44,786 fans at Canad Inns Stadium, where surprisingly mild temperatures and fierce defence ruled the evening. McCallum's efforts earned him the title of Most Valuable Canadian, and tied Don Sweet, Paul Osbaldiston and Sean Fleming for most field goals in a Grey Cup game.

Quarterback Dave Dickenson was named Most Valuable Player after completing 18 of 29 passes for 184 yards. He also rushed for 53 yards and was the main reason the Lions jumped ahead in the early going.

And when the offence broke down, McCallum was there to finish. His last might have been his most impressive, a 47-yarder with time winding down in the fourth and the outcome still very much in doubt.

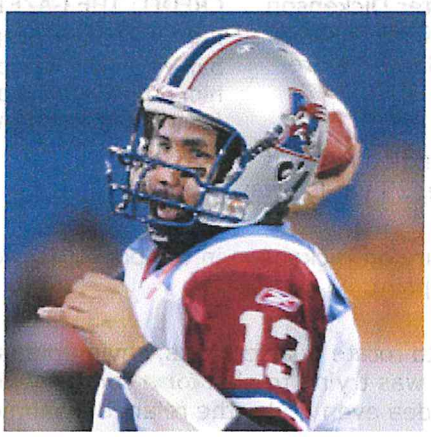
"Now the daughters can go out and play on the playground and they're not getting harassed any more," McCallum said. "It should be good now."

It wasn't quite as good two years ago.



CREDIT: CP PHOTO/Frank Gunn

B.C. Lions kicker Paul McCallum (right) and Buck Pierce react to McCallum's sixth field goal against the Montreal Alouettes during the fourth quarter of the CFL Grey Cup Sunday, Nov. 19, 2006 in Winnipeg.



CREDIT: CP PHOTO/Frank Gunn

Montreal Alouettes quarterback Anthony Calvillo throws a pass during the first quarter of the 94th CFL Grey Cup Sunday, Nov. 19, 2006 in Winnipeg, Man.

McCallum, then with the Saskatchewan Roughriders, missed an 18-yard kick in overtime against the Lions in the West Division final. Saskatchewan lost, and defeat did not rest lightly on the shoulder of some citizens. One man was eventually given a suspended sentence for threatening to burn down the kicker's house in Regina, with a provincial court judge saying the man created an "atmosphere of terror."

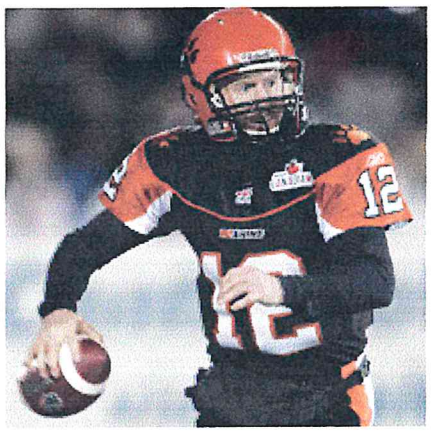
"He got a bad deal," Lions slotback Jason Clermont said of his teammate. "He's been a consistent player who missed one field goal that might not necessarily give his team a chance to win. It might have given his team the chance to tie the game — and everybody literally s— on him for it."

"Being in Regina all those years, it was unfortunate I didn't get an opportunity to win one there," McCallum said. "But, you know what? Life goes on. I've moved on, came here and everything worked out for me."

McCallum hit three field goals in the first quarter to stake the Lions to a 9-0 lead. Dickenson, the game's MVP, wasn't even on the field when the Vancouver-based team scored its only touchdown of the game.

B.C. coach Wally Buono substituted his 33-year-old starter for backup Buck Pierce in a number of scenarios last night, including a play in the second quarter. After Dickenson placed the Lions in position, Pierce faked a handoff to running back Joe Smith before pitching to Ian Smart.

The special teams specialist angled left and ended his run in the end zone, 25 yards away.



CREDIT: CP PHOTO/Adrian Wyld

B.C. Lions quarterback Dave Dickenson looks for a reciever during the first quarter of the 94th CFL Grey Cup on Sunday, Nov. 19, 2006 in Winnipeg, Man.

CREDIT: THE GAZETTE/ Pierre Obendrauf

Robert Edwards of the Alouettes run with ball as Javier Glatt of the lions tries to stop him during second quarter action during Grey Cup game in Winnipeg on Nov 19, 2006.

Montreal increased the pressure on Dickenson in the pocket, slowing the game to a crawl from an offensive standpoint.

Buono defended his decision to rotate quarterbacks, saying plans had been put in place a month ago. The team was trying to plan for a cold and windy evening in Winnipeg, and kept with the idea even under the relatively balmy and calm conditions that appeared Sunday night.

Montreal fought back in the third quarter with a two-yard plunge from running back Robert Edwards. But with the Alouettes threatening late in the fourth quarter, Edwards was stuffed from the Lions' two, and fumbled on the very next play.

It was a critical turn of events, and it went a long way to deciding which dressing room would feature champagne, and which would feature silence.

"This is amazing," Lions slotback Geroy Simon said. "Words can't describe how I feel. To win my first one, it feels so good. It's been a magical season."

That kind of euphoria, predictably, did not survive in the other dressing room.

Montreal finished second in the title game for the fourth time in seven seasons. The Alouettes fell 38-35 in overtime to the Edmonton Eskimos last year, and the losing experience has not gotten any better with age.

"I'm just as devastated this year," Montreal centre Bryan Chiu said. "We've been here five times. But getting here, it's not enough. We've got to finish it."

McCallum finished the job, with every chance he was given.

And whenever he's finished playing, he'll even return to Regina.

"Regina is my home," he said. "That's where we're going to raise our kids. It's not that I wouldn't want to live in Vancouver — it's just too expensive."

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